00 American Poems

Masterpieces of Lyric, Epic and Ballad from Colonial Times to the Present

edited by
Selden Rodman



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About This Book

[illegible] of the great American poems [illegible]

poems were not published until 194[illegible] Many of Emily Dickinson's best lyrics appeared for the first time in 1945 Poets like Jones Very, Frederick Goddard Tuckerman, Thomas Wolfe Gertrude Stein had never been included in a popular anthology of poetry—Emerson, Poe and Whitman had generally been represented by inferior and uncharacteristic pieces One had to go to song books or compilations of folklore to find any of the great ballads which are a special glory of our heritage Young poets of outstanding originality—Elizabeth Bishop and Theodore Roethke Peter Viereck and Robert Lowell—had yet to be published in an American anthology

In a very real sense then 100 *American Poems* has been edited and is being published to prove a theory—the theory that the reading public will accept and even welcome an anthology of uncompromising quality Neither in the striking Introduction nor in the body of the book has any effort been made to talk down to the reader Some of the most popular poets of past and present have been omitted without a qualm And the old chestnuts that have tended to mislead the anthology reading audience here and abroad—from Thanatopsis "The Barefoot Boy," "The Raven and O Captain My Captain! to Miniver Cheevy American Names Patterns and Euclid Alone Has Looked on Beauty Bare —are conspicuous by their absence

But perhaps the feature of this collection that gives it its real continuity and inspiration is the fact that it has been edited with a creative purpose The editor has not allowed his pride in the achievements of our verse to divert him from its weaknesses He believes that a tragic dualism in American poetry can be traced from Emerson's time to the present and that only by a recognition of that split can a real integration and a renaissance of great poetry occur

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INTRODUCTION

I *Reputation and Reappraisal*

Poetry the only high art in America that has flourished con unuously in an atmosphere hostile to uncommercial creative activity reflects the paradox of its survival The first major poetry to spring from the shoot of a great tradition it bears the scars of its persistent effort to free itself from parental resemblance In its capacity to assume as many shapes as the landscape with which it unfolded it drew upon the native spokesmen of chain gangs revival meetings and gin mills at the same time going as far afield as the Hebrew and Hindu

metres recognizable and

ises as a naturalist s

gainst the same nationalism practical matei

ird zed taste that have sapped the vitality of democracy in

ierican poetry has

aternal shade of a

cal statuary, and

some rather overgrown metaphysical weeds obscure the view and paralyze the *primary emotions The poets on location are* preoccupied with their own sensibility If they are to emerge

sed the time

When the psalm s ngs instead of the s nger
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INTRODUCTION

I *Reputation and Reappraisal*

Poetry, the only high art in America that has flourished continuously in an atmosphere hostile to uncommercial creative activity, reflects the paradox of its survival. The first major poetry to spring from the shoot of a great tradition, it bears the scars of its persistent effort to free itself from parental resemblance. In its capacity to assume as many shapes as the landscape with which it unfolded, it drew upon the native spokesmen of chain gangs, revival meetings and gin mills, at the same time [illegible] prophets [illegible] uncouth [illegible] diary the [illegible] and in our own time the article for a businessman's magazine that exploded into a 500-page book. The only poetry in history which had taken as its major theme the idea of democracy—that conviction of the innate worth of every man which [illegible]

Today, however, as often in the past, American poetry has avoided this conflict by retreating to the maternal shade of a formal garden: Anglican hedge, neo-classical statuary, and some rather overgrown [illegible] and that body must be revalued in terms of the lost voice, thrilling and immortal, which prophesied the time

When the psalm [illegible]
When th[illegible]
When t[illegible]

T. S. ELIOT 1888– (*Continued*)
DIFFICULTIES OF A STATESMAN . . . . . . [illegible]
LINES FOR AN OLD MAN . . . . . [illegible]
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PORTRAIT II . [illegible]
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ROBERT LOWELL 1917–
THE QUAKER GRAVEYARD IN NANTUCKET [illegible]

[illegible] *of the Best Songs and Lyrical* [illegible]

[illegible] an

poems. Its almost equally popular and influential successor, *The Oxford Book of English Verse*, edited by Sir Arthur [illegible]

[illegible]

were, to pick two names at random, eight poems each by Thomas Hood and W. S. Blunt. When Professor Quiller-Couch revised his anthology thirty-nine years later with the addition of eighty-three new poems, he revised slightly his [illegible] Bryant's "Thanatop-[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]lity when it commissioned its first anthology of exclusively American poetry in 1927 it could hardly have chosen as editor a poet of more neo-Anglican tastes than Bliss Carmen. Carmen selected seventeen poems by Longfellow to sixteen by Emerson, ten by Thomas Bailey Aldrich to nine by Whitman, nothing at all from Melville, Cummings, or Eliot. Of [illegible]

[illegible]

Whittier and James Russell Lowell—and no less than ten by H. C. Bunner. By comparison, Edmund Clarence Stedman's *An American Anthology* (1900), and Louis Untermeyer's *American Poetry from the Beginning to Whitman* (1931), were pioneer works.

Today a thorough reappraisal of American poetry is in order. It is not enough to merely carry a step further the revolution in taste accomplished piecemeal by Untermeyer, the herald of the Chicago "renaissance" of 1912, or by Conrad Aiken, the prophet of the "metaphysical" revival that fol-

When a university course convinces as a slumbering wom
child convince,
When the minted gold in the vault smiles like the night
man's daughter . . .

The voice by which up to now American poetry has
represented abroad has been for the most part, neither
ing nor immortal. It has been familiar—and cherished in the sense th
old coat is familiar—and cherished for the same reasons
its recognizable shabbiness, its undistinguished charm
easily supportable mediocrity.

OPINIONS ABROAD At a time of lately victorious comradeship
arms, and one in which the most influen
American poet resides in England while E
land's outstanding contemporary poet has become an Ame
can citizen, it may be thought anachronistic to talk in term
of the rivalry of the English-speaking muses. Yet the inferi
reputation of American poetry both at home and abroad fo
which pedantic arbiters of taste in both countries have been
to blame continues. The indignant sense of national inferior
ity that expressed itself as far back as the time of the Ameri
can Revolution in Philip Freneau's

> Can we never be thought
> To have learning or grace
> Unless it be brought
> From that damnable place?

—has abated here in respect to almost every commodity
poetry.

How to repair the damage. Standards of a purely aesthe
character would rule out at once that very clash of priv
and public styles which has given American poetry its spec
vitality. To fasten upon the famous or favorite pieces th
are, by their inordinate celebrity, given our poetry its und
served reputation for derivative grace would only . . . well the
for Freneau's "The Wild Honey Suckle," Bryant's "Thana
sis," and Emerson's "The Rhodora" are good poems in the
Wordsworthian tradition. Wordsworth wrote better. Long
... "My Lost Youth," Whittier's "The Barefoot Boy,"
... "The Raven," and Whitman's "O Captain, My Cap
... are inferior and unrepresentative poems by any dis
criminating standard. Robinson's "The Man Against th
Amy Lowell's "Patterns," and Pound's "Ballad of th
... Fere" were Pointless before the ... to death.

Golden Treasury of the Best Songs and Lyrical

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his contemporaries, Carmen vouchsafed a poem apiece to Sandburg and Pound as against four to Odell Shepard, five

Whittier and James Russell Lowell—and no less than ten by H C Bunner By comparison Edmund Clarence Stedman's *An American Anthology* (1900) and Louis Untermeyer's *American Poetry from the Beginning to Whitman* (1931),

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> Can we never be thought
> To have *learning* or grace
> Unless it be brought
> From that damnable place?

—has abated here in respect to almost every commodity but poetry

How to repair the damage Standards of a purely aesthetic character would rule out at once that very clash of private and public styles which has given American poetry its special vitality To fasten upon the famous or favorite pieces that have by *their inordinate celebrity given our poetry its unde*served reputation for derivative grace would only swell the error Freneau s The Wild Honey Suckle Bryant s "Thana topsis and Emerson s *The Rhodora* are good poems in the Wordsworthian tradition Wordsworth wrote better Long fellow s My Lost Youth Whittier s The Barefoot Boy Poe s The Raven and Whitman s O Captain My Cap tain! are inferior and *unrepresentative poems by any dis* criminating standard Robinson s The Man Against the Sky Amy Lowell's "Patterns and *Pound's Ballad of the* Goodly Fere were *bloodless before the anthologists quoted them to death*

... whose manuscript poems ... 1937, Edward ... re Emerson and
belongs in the company of the great English "metaphysical" poets Crashaw, Herbert and Donne. Like Donne, Taylor ... for the "nir

... e

... ous communion with the Almighty ... n
... the descendant of seven genera... ng the

PHILIP FRENEAU Philip Freneau is the first American poet for whom writing can be truthfully said to have been an end in itself He was also a deist, who, contrast to Taylor's puritan faith in a "divine and super... natural light" took sides with the international libertarian ...

...rom the slashing Jeffersonian partisan and satirist whom Washington called that rascal Freneau" from the heavy drinker who died in a snowstorm on his way home from the local tavern *from the man who could write*

> The landlord gouged in either eye
> Here drains his bottle to the dregs,
> Or borrows Susan's pipe while she
> Prepares the bacon and the eggs.

BRYANT AND POE William Cullen Bryant's contemporaries called him the great tone-imparter" and his tone—it is so subdued we hear it today with difficulty—may indeed have been cultivated as a protest against such raucous contemporaries of Freneau as Francis Hopkinson, the Philadelphia dandy and Jack-of-all trades, and Joel Barlow the Yale wit and speculator in land who died while with Napoleon at Warsaw One hundred years after the precocious Bryant drafted Thanatopsis" in 1811 his literary descendants were still trying to "tone up" American literature, and happily they were waging a losing battle But in his own time the effort to make taste conform to England (or to a

lowed it In terms of 1948 both movements are as dad Emerson's Transcendentalism

II The Forerunners

The struggle between the mystic and the practical man soul and society the artist and the prophet that was to enl American poetry down to present day began even b the eighteenth century seventeenth century Pu poet Anne Bradstreet, w

ANNE BRADSTREET
BENJAMIN TOMPSON
AND EDWARD TAYLOR

The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America or Se Poems was published in London in 1650 gravitated betw pedantic humorless couplets in the style of Du Bartas the Euphuists—

> The winds Cholick oft my bowels rend
> To break the darksome prison where it's pen'd
> The Cramp and Gout doth sadly torture me
> And the restraining lame Sciatica

—and some rather *delightful* unpretentious verses about love for her husband in which vein she reveals herself true ancestor of a long line of family-ridden Amer women

> I am obnoxious to each carping tongue
> Who says my hand a needle better fits

Her younger contemporaries Benjamin Tompson and ward Taylor have little in common with Anne Bradstre contemplative piety Tompson the first native born Am can poet was a schoolmaster and physician and s cha teristically American note drives through his outwardly c ventional epitaph on his father

> Judicious zeal! New England's Boanerges
> Lies tombless not to spare the church's charges
> But that the world may know he lacks no tomb
> Who in ten thousand hearts command d room
> While thus the thundering textman hidden lies
> Some virgins slumber others want thine

wife, herself a poet and early Abolitionist Lowell went through a spell of liberalism, joining at least the fringe of ... that was one of the faces of ... came spokes- ... ice the face "good breed

Longfellow, whom Lowell succeeded in 1853 as Smith ...

hat is, instead of commenting on people and manners in e brittle style of *The Bigelow Papers* and *The Autocrat of e Breakfast Table*, Longfellow wrote the poems and in- ...

Like Washington Irving before him, Longfellow brought back from his successive trips to Europe a grab-bag of romantic legends and in addition a witch's cauldron of German mysticism and Scandinavian metres Unfortunately they blended poorly with his misguided effort to fashion a gentlemanly native poetry of the Folk The self-consciously Indian terseness of "Hiawatha" is less memorable than the anonymous parodist's

> He killed the noble Mudjokivis
> Of the skin he made him mittens
> Made them with the fur side inside
> *Put the inside skinside outside*

It is a temptation to endow Longfellow's more rustic contemporary Whittier with gifts of a superior order merely ...

miles west of the center of Boston that one must look for the first truly native incandescence of poetry

Bryant's healthy intolerance for provincial standards to the point of sophistication—judging art by its intrinsic merit—and beyond to the point of absurdity. The end of art, he was finally to say, is pleasure, not truth, and from this it was but a step to the artificial prescription for writing "The Raven." We are not surprised to learn that Poe admired Bryant, Thomas Hood and Tennyson excessively—or that he

and mechanical rhythm whose facility well merited Emerson's reference to "the jingle man."

What is much more surprising and really impossible to explain rationally is that the genius of Poe was so great that in spite of himself it triumphed now and then over both his aestheticism and the commanding intellect with which he *fortified his theories. In these few poems, as in his best tales,* romanticism achieved its utmost in the United States, rivalling in suggestiveness Coleridge's "Christabel" and "Rime of the Ancient Mariner." But Poe's work in terms of our own literature remains an exotic curiosity rather than a creative influence.

III *The New England Renaissance*

THE BOSTON CONFORMISTS

Without either Poe's morbidity or his genius, James Russell Lowell shared the Baltimore poet's shrewd critical temper and his impressionism. "The first duty of the Muse," he said, "is to be delightful"; and while Lowell adhered to this safe if limited doctrine he managed—as in the jingling "Fable for Critics"—to be *shrewd and delightful at the same time.* It was only later in life, when he succumbed to the view that "God made poets ... to keep alive the traditions of the pure, the holy and the beautiful," that he began to write graceful and boring odes. In his youth and under the influence of ...

h nature at Walden Pond. The land on which this ancestor of Frank Lloyd Wright and Henry Miller retired briefly to play his flute and write his masterpiece cost $8.08; his food, he tells us, amounted to 27 cents a week. But had they cost more, Thoreau would simply have moved farther west, for he was concerned with other values:

Explore your own higher latitudes. . . . Simplify! Simplify! Our life is frittered away by detail. . . .
We do not ride on the railroad; it rides upon us. . . .
We are now in great haste to construct a magnetic telegraph from Maine to Texas; but Maine and Texas, it may be, have nothing important to communicate. . . .
Heaven is under our feet as well as over our heads. . . .
Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in.

Fond, as Channing said, of maximizing the minimum, Thoreau was too busy with life and with being a poet to squander much time making a living. Intolerant of any completeness save intensity of living, he had no use for organized religion. When reminded of heaven on his deathbed, he answered "One world at a time." For organized government he had as little use. "Nations! What are nations? Tartars! and Huns! and Chinamen! Like insects they swarm. The historian strives in vain to make them memorable. It is for want of a man that there are so many men." Yet paradoxically the man who went to jail rather than pay a poll tax and with his "Civil Disobedience" gave Gandhi the slogan for a mass movement was not averse to violence in a good cause and at first welcomed the Civil War. His genius cannot be contained in any consistency.

His poetry, patterned on Greek phrase-making and Hindu thought, owes a little to Aeschylus' clear eye for the commonest things, a little to George Herbert and Emerson, but [illegible] ... [illegible] ... restrained passion and honesty. "The [illegible] ... [illegible] ... the feet of the [illegible]

the present [illegible]
bl... on the sense of science. The ... [illegible]
[illegible] ... is a metre-making argument [illegible]

be true ... [illegible]
changes are in me. He exclaimed ... [illegible]
also in a humbler vein [illegible]

EMERSON S CONCORD To avail ourselves of the literature of otl nations wrote the elder William Elle Channing father of the poet who was Eme son s friend we must place ourselves on a level with them A people into whose minds the thoughts of foreigners a poured perpetually needs an energy within itself to resist modify this mighty influence When Channing s discipl Emerson delivered at the age of thirty four his revolutionai Phi Beta Kappa address at Harvard the audience—an America—was divided as if with the stroke of a knife

Our day of dependence our long apprenticeship to the learnin of other lands draws to a close I ask not for the great th remote the romantic what is doing in Italy or Arabia I embrac the common The meal in the firkin the milk in the par the ballad in the street the news of the boat the form and th gait of the body

About Emerson in the Concord of the 40s and 50s wa assembled such a company of genius near genius and eccen tricity as could not be found in history without travelling a far afield as Goethe s Weimar Shakespeare s London o Leonardo s Florence

There was Jones Very the half mad sonneteer of God tor between his humility and sense of defilement There wa Hawthorne bearing the weight of the puritan past on hi shoulders whose studies of the soul of man through sphinx like symbols eluded even Emerson There was Bronsor Alcott the progressive educator who found children sc attractive because they are still under the sway of instinct and whom Emerson had watched with mingled sympathy and alarm mount a ladder at the incredible Con Sociate Family of nearby Fruitlands to pour water from a pitcher over women covered with sheets in a shelter of clothes horses There was the daemonic Margaret Fuller who gave Tran

cally warned) There was Thoreau

THOREAU AND WALDEN POND I have never met a man who was quite awake How could I have looked him in the face? Thus spoke Henry Thoreau exactly one hundred years ago when he moved two miles south of Concord to live in a self made shack in communi n

e are now in great haste to construct a magnetic telegraph
from Maine to Texas but Maine and Texas it may
be have nothing important to communicate
eaven is under our feet as well as over our heads
me is but the stream I go a fishing in

ond as Channing said of maximizing the minimum Thoreau was too busy with life and with being a poet to squander much time making a living. Intolerant of any completeness the intensity of living he had no use for organized religion When reminded of heaven on his deathbed he answered One world at a time For organized government he had as little use "Nations What are nations Tartars! and Huns! and Chinamen Like insects they swarm The historian

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His poetry patterned on Greek phrase making and Hindu thought owes a little to Aeschylus clear eye for the commonest things a little to George Herbert and Emerson but most to his own self contained passion and honesty "The poem," he said once is drawn out from under the feet of the poet, his whole weight has rested on this ground He lived in the present He knew profoundly that every poet has trembled on the verge of science He must have agreed with his

changes are in me! he exclaimed in a moment of ecstasy, but also in a humbler vein

My life has been the poem I would have writ
But I could not both live and utter it

EMERSON'S POETRY Whereas "prose" was the natural vehicle f Thoreau's poetry, Emerson's genius express itself most easily in verse. The more famou *Essays* are little more than chains of epigrams and poet insights held together by a title, the poems are without the sometimes pompous and oracular tone

To clothe the fiery thought
In simple words succeeds
For still the craft of genius is
To mask a king in weeds

From Landor Emerson learned to prune his line of adjectiv and mannerisms but he mounted them into an atmosphere o possessed yea-saying The result was a hard dry, magicall precise diction giving somewhat the effect of Plato s philoso phers discoursing with Hebraic assurance around a cracke barrel in the general store

In terms of the wholeness of poetry Emerson never quit achieved the destiny he prophesied Our poets he ha lamented are content with a civil and conformed manner o living, writing poems from the fancy at a safe distance fron their experience —and that was exactly the weakness o Emerson himself Far more than the chaste Thoreau he wa a victim of that very New England frigidity against whicl he so brilliantly inveighed He could not quite let himsel

ue the common
Yet their very
ody of the min
tonic reverbera
tion of the ice at Walden Pond across which the poet de lighted to skip stones of a crisp sunny morning

LYRIC EPILOGUE EMILY DICKINSON Emerson once met his gr ciple, the only contem English or American gift transcending his own but wrote verse there is no record of

Sailor of the atmosphere
Swimmer through the waves of air;
Voyager of light and noon
Epicurean of June
Wait I prithee till I come
Within earshot of thy hum —
All without is martyrdom

These lines to the burly dozing humble bee "that "animated torrid zone" are Emerson's but the style is pure Emily Dickinson. How could he have known that there in the fugitive, elfin person of the Amherst minister's eccentric daughter,

the music Emily had said and it was not until five years after her death in 1886 that the splitting was begun and the end is not yet

Why was Emily Dickinson at once so articulate and so ticent Her biographer George Whicher after tracing the course of her two thwarted loves and her ultimate retirement into the shadows of the big house on Main Street con

God Like Blake she sought beauty in minute particulars. Like Thoreau she valued individuality and like him she travelled widely in her own native village and found "an

My life has been the poem I would have writ
But I could not both live and utter it

EMERSON'S POETRY Whereas "prose" was the natural vehicle fo Thoreau's poetry, Emerson's genius expresse itself most easily in verse The more famou *Essays* are little more than chains of epigrams and poeti insights held together by a title, the poems are without the sometimes pompous and oracular tone

> To clothe the fiery thought
> In simple words succeeds,
> For still the craft of genius is
> To mask a king in weeds

From Landor Emerson learned to prune his line of adjective and mannerisms but he mounted then into an atmosphere of possessed yea-saying The result was a hard, dry, magically precise diction, giving somewhat the effect of Plato s philosophers discoursing with Hebraic assurance around a cracker barrel in the general store

In terms of the wholeness of poetry, Emerson never quite achieved the destiny he prophesied Our poets," he had lamented, are content with a civil and conformed manner of [illegible] from the fancy at a safe distance from

of
as
ch
elf
n
as
de

Emerson s poems preach abandonment to the senses without being themselves abandoned They celebrate the common touch without revealing a common humanity Yet their very frailty is moving The clear spirit if not the body of the man comes through They ring with the strong tonic reverberation of the ice at Walden Pond across which the poet delighted to skip stones of a crisp sunny morning

LYRIC EPILOGUE EMILY DICKINSON Emerson once met his gre ciple the only contemp English or American, gift transcending his own but if he even susp wrote verse there is no record of

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These lines to the "burly, dozing humble bee," that "animated torrid zone," are Emerson's, but the style is pure Emily Dickinson. How could he have known that there, in the fugitive, elfin person of the Amherst minister's eccentric daughter, New England's puritan tradition, Yankee humor and spir

after her death in 1886 that the splitting was begun, and the end is not yet.

Why was Emily Dickinson at once so articulate and so reticent? Her biographer, George Whicher, after tracing the course of her two thwarted loves, and her ultimate retirement into the shadows of the big house on Main Street, con cludes ...

keep the bitter waters from stagnating in her breast, she won a sanity that could make even grief a plaything.

Loneliness she did not court; it was something to be borne. In her will to make good come from evil she reincarnated Anne Bradstreet. Like the Bryant of "Thanatopsis," only more piercingly, she found in nature the visible manifestation of God. Like Blake she sought beauty in minute particulars. Like Thoreau she valued individuality, and like him she travelled widely in her own native village and found an ecstasy in living. Amherst, and in the last years her garden, became the universe.

"If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know *that* is poetry." It is the quality that her own singular

... ending in the letter ... At its best—and this is not as with most lyric masters in a dozen poems, but in scores—her idiom

is condensed quick as pickerel as capable of the most per sonal as well as the most universal elevating the simplest hymn metres to rapture, achieving great affirmation even out of platitude

IV Climax and Decline

We have yet had no genius in America with tyrannous eye which knew the value of our incomparable materials Ou

Homer too literal and historical I look in vain for the poet I describe

have read the prophecy but who had already said I was su mering simmering simmering—Emerson brought me to a boil mailed copies of his privately printed *Leaves of Grass* to the sage of Concord and to Whittier Whittier took one good look and tossed his copy in the fire Emerson sat down and wrote a famous letter I give you joy for your free and brave thoughts he wrote I find the courage of treatment that so delights us and which large perception only can in spire I greet you at the beginning of a great career Years later Emerson's puritanism or his outraged sense of form got the better of him I expected him to make the songs of a nation he opined inventories And he American anthology ture had begun

WALT WHITMAN'S LEAVES OF GRASS

As for Whitman he promptly (and without permission) slipped the letter on the first of countless new editions of the *Leaves* and went to work in his own way "I will not descend among professors and capitalists he an nounced truculently "I will turn the ends of my trousers *around* my boots and go with drivers and boatmen In other authors of the first class [he was already supremely self confident] there have been celebrators of low life and charac

[illegible] realness, his self-educated bearishness, his sensuality, his style shocked his contemporaries beyond endurance. Love for mankind, in which no poet, ancient or modern, has surpassed Whitman (Shakespeare understood men, which is something else again) was more an attitude than a reality in the 1855 volume. The poet of "Song of Myself" identifies himself electrifyingly with the survivors of a shipwreck, he [illegible]

[illegible] Endlessly Rocking" and "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," in the great muted death poems of his last years.

The style of *Leaves of Grass* has puzzled generations of critics. Where did it come from? How did he write it? And is it poetry? None of the questions can be answered with finality. Whitman himself, at its birth up to his ears in Free Soil Republicanism and the local small-town journalism of the Brooklyn Daily Eagle, averred that "We" wrote the editorials, "I" the letter, and his "Soul" the poems. There were

mo [illegible]
his [illegible]
for [illegible]
sp [illegible]
N [illegible]
tainly th [illegible]
direct th [illegible]
men, an [illegible] than
In [illegible] style of *Leaves* it is [illegible] the rhythms of the [illegible] and we know that [illegible] the rhetoric of the theatre and especially the recitative of Italian opera ("heart music," he called it, not "art music") delighted him. The technical devices by which his loose dithyrambic style achieves its impact—balancing of long phrases, suspension of meaning to the final word of a paragraph, recurrence, assonance, trochaic in preference to the customary English iambic foot, and what Dr. Canby calls "perpendicular alliteration"—may be spotted. But the ultimate poetry, the cumulative effect of his incanta

tions can only be felt by the reader who is sympathetic t
ward or abandons himself to Whitman s unique exuberanc
Few will deny the flatness the pretentiousness the disorga
ized repetition of large stretches of *Leaves of Grass* But t
catalogues as such cannot be dismissed they are often re
vant parts of the whole And the magical phrases ("I recli
by the sills of the exquisite flexible doors) are the more dr
matic and memorable for their relative infrequency *Leav
of Grass* is the life history of a whole man it was *meant* to l
suggestive and growing not complete and dead

Whitman almost single handed invented the Americ

humanity transcended his patriotism He was the greate
American nationalist and—for identical reasons!—the fir
poet of internationalism and One World His celebratior
of the wonder and mystery of sex got him fired from a govern
ment job and drove Emerson (among others) to urge him t
censor the *Leaves* but they caused D H Lawrence mor
than half a century later to call Whitman the first to sma
the old moral concept that the soul of man is somethin
superior and above the flesh

HERMAN MELVILLE Melville like Whitman was too native to
American to be appreciated in an Ameri
that was straining for Anglican gentility and
paradoxically both poets achieved their first reputation in
England *Moby Dick* the great prose poem of pessimism of
mankind pitting its puny force against the aimless malev
olence of nature is the counterforce and equal of *Leaves of
Grass* Its failure drove Melville (like Hardy) to poetry in
his later years and like Hardy s his verse is cantankerous
unc

to l
kno
have been written by an American wife in 1947 and it might
be shocking to any other country in the world to realize that it
was not *until 1947* that Melville s *Collected Poems* were
finally published Melville himself like his friend Haw
thorne, and like E A Robinson in our time

born a giant splendor surpassing the felicities of lesser poets

i e strenuous yet some end to earn
The haglets spin though now no more astern
Like shuttles hurrying in the looms
Aloft through rigging frayed they ply—
Cross and recross—weave and inweave

SIDNEY LANIER AND OTHERS The period from the Civil War to the turn of the century and beyond through which some of the giants of the first renaissance lived is as barren of poetic vitality as any in our history All the cadences of decline are in its new voices Edward Sill

a friend since the war pretty much of the whole of life has been merely not dying William Vaughn Moody's most famous poem characteristically entitled An Ode in Time of Hesitation is full of such poetic props as fiery chalices potters shards, dissolved limbs, gleeful children ("spying the arbutus, spring's dear recluse"—!) and "men of noble breed It is a frightening example of exemplary liberal sentiment clothed to academic perfection in all the cast-off rags and tags of three centuries of (English) poetry

Without any of the spiritual elevation or patriotism Moody Stephen Crane's War Is Kind by comparison is l a stick of dynamite It comes off It goes off Not a word

ento rhythms and abandonment of rhyme its crisp understa ment cleared the way for new vision and fresh cadences

V The Second Renaissance Chicago to Pa

In Moody's Ode an effort had been made to convey t untapped vitality for American poetry of the Middle and l West

> Chicago sitteth at the northwest gates
> With restless violent hands and casual tongue
> Moulding her mighty fates

Twelve years later in the poem that ushered in the Chica Renaissance, a very different kind of poet addressed t same city

> they tell me that you are brutal and my reply is on t
> *faces of women and children I have seen the ma*
> of wanton hunger
> And having answered so I turn once more to those who sneer
> this my city and I give them back the sneer and s
> to them
> Come and show me another city with lifted head sing ng
> proud to be alive and coarse and strong and cunning

Finessing four decades of refinement the voice of Wh man had spoken again

SANDBURG AND JEFFERS

Carl Sandburg had been variously a scen shifter dish washer truck handler port lder before he wr written editorials f he virtues and limit Sprawling or co

densed as a telegram each poem pictures some single the powerhouse of *industrial America the fog in city street* a jazzband trying to harmonize moonlight and chaos th slam bang and roar of steel mills an encounter in a Pullm smoker the disappearance of a familiar whore from

dmired Ossian the rhetorical Celtic soothsayer, and Jeffers'

But for th

ouning his values, desires, a picture of the universe, all on
is own humanity " For humanity he says prophetically in

MASTERS FROST AND ROBINSON

Hardly less devastating an antidote was offered by Edgar Lee Masters, whose Spoon River

Woodlands meadows streams and rivers—

Without any of the spiritual elevation or patriotism ... arison is h ... a word t ... it—t dev ... bitter re ism—cynicism, if you will—that the second great awakenin in American poetry will spring Its open-eyed realism, its sta c ito rhythms and abandonment of rhyme, its crisp understat ment, cleared the way for new vision and fresh cadences

V. *The Second Renaissance: Chicago to Par*

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SANDBURG AND JEFFERS ... porte ... wrot ...

a jazzband trying to harmonize moonlight and chaos, th slam bang and roar of steel mills an encounter in a Pullma smoker, the disappearance of a familiar whore '

... the current Practising ... the West, ... his board, ...aching the "Gospel of Beauty," ... her Vaudeville," lecturing for the Y M C A and the Anti Saloon League and reaching a mass audience that Whitman only dreamed of Yet this was the poet who, with more of a pure ...ct's magic than any American save Poe burnt himself ... the ... of his verse till it became a ...

...eart to be contented with the applause of ... middle-classes yet for any more discriminating public he knew ...t how to write The miracle was that in a few lyrics and "spirituals" he achieved unconsciously an art irresistible to ...h

The ballads and neo-folk poetry of Stephen Vincent and William Rose Benét were more artful than Lindsay's, and have been almost equally popular but at their best lack that element of uncontrived madness that occasionally lifts Lindsay's chants above sentimentality into the realm of pure poetry The savage urban portraits of Kenneth Fearing carried Sandburg's "editorializing" a step further, but into the blind alley of caricature Muriel Rukeyser's early hymns to the underdog of the "class struggle" achieved a fusion of tenderness and indignation that may yet have issue

EZRA POUND AND T S ELIOT For better or worse the dominant mode of contemporary American poetry was not to be the regional and Whitmanesque or the "proletarian" Harriet Monroe's *Poetry*, a Chicago monthly which had pioneered in the discovery of ...

reductio ad absurdum of the popular current Practising what Whitman preached he tramped the roads of the West, offering "Rhymes to be Traded for Bread" for his board, preaching the "Gospel of Beauty" and "The Higher Vaudeville," lecturing for the Y M C A and the Anti Saloon League and reaching a mass audience that Whitman only dreamed of Yet this was the poet who with more of a pure poet's magic than any American save Poe burnt himself out, dissipated the well-springs of his verse till it became a childlike Pre-Raphaelite trickle and finally "harassed by debt and the sense of defeat" drank a bottle of Lysol in the house in Springfield Illinois where he had spent his boyhood The key to the tragedy perhaps lies as much in the split that had taken place in American poetry as in the poet's unstable character Lindsay was too sensitive and introverted an artist at heart to be contented with the applause of the philistine middle-classes yet for any more discriminating public he knew not how to write The miracle was that in a few lyrics and "spirituals" he achieved unconsciously an art irresistible to both

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EZRA POUND AND T S ELIOT For better or worse the dominant mode of contemporary American poetry was not to be the regional and Whitmanesque or the proletarian Harriet Monroe's Poetry a Chicago monthly which had pioneered in the discovery of Sandburg Masters and Lindsay led the way also in bringing to the American public the first works of the Paris "expatriates" Pound and Eliot Hemingway and Stein Stevens and Cummings

Imagism or Amyism as Ezra Pound was later to call it after its other co-founder Amy Lowell was a term invented in London in 1912 by a group of Georgian poets, which [illegible] Little H D to describe their revolt [illegible] the direction of

ondary to her commanding personality and to her ability to inspire both enthusiasm and publicity Pound moved impetuously on to other 'isms But Imagism had served to clear the air

> Come my songs let us speak of perfection
> We shall get ourselves rather disliked

So begins a characteristic early poem by Pound the bad boy from Idaho the great catalytic who was able to make a style—and a very good style sharp and clean as a scalpel—out of such seemingly haphazard ingredients as Imagism and Vorticism China and the France of the Troubadours Guido C

isolation the animosity generated by his fancied neglect and the poverty of his rootless egotism burst forth in the uncontrolled eclecticism of the *Cantos* and his petulant espousal of fascism

T S Eliot s development as a poet contrasts with Pound s at almost every point With Eliot everything is weighed calculated refined to the verge of pedantry I only pretend to know he could humorlessly write "as much about versifying as my carpenter knows about woodwork In orderly con

Church (Murder in the Cathedral) and finally to the ripe religious philosophical soul-searching of the *Four Quartets*.

Eliot s grandfather wrote a sermon on Suffering Considered as a Discipline and his mother was the author of a poem on the martyred religious fanatic, Savonarola In his very first poems Eliot moved with the sureness of a mathematician preparing himself with elementary problems for a distant synthesis While still at Harvard and under the influence of Santayana and Babbitt he schooled himself in the tangential approach of the 17th Century metaphysical poets and of Laforgue and the later French symbolists But the energy generated by Eliot s poems, like their dryness is his own

s an American poet—for he remains as firmly if reluc ly American as Auden remains essentially English—Eliot mplished with symbolism what Robinson with psycho cal narrative, failed to achieve poetic expression of the tration of modern man Whenever our literature tends to duce too many Whitmans" Sandburg was to write, an t arrives to counterbalance that cheerful and extraverted dency" The Hawthorne in Eliot has been remarked He ongs also in the company of Henry James, whose review of itman's *Drum Taps* in 1865 (" the effort of an essen ly prosaic mind to lift itself by prolonged muscular effort o poetry") he would surely have approved Eliot's influence English poetry as well as American has been incalculable, d only today shows signs of waning

VE WOMEN In an age spilling over with accomplished minor poets and overcharged with feminine lent, five women stand out for the individuality of their hievements

Gertrude Stein the expatriate better known for her operas d ponderous experiments in breaking up language, carried e tendency to abstraction in American writing that began th Emerson and Henry James to its ultimate conclusion

I have come
And I've not come in vain.
I have come to sweep
The House of the Lord
Clean clean for I've come
And I've not come in vain

Compare this Shaker hymn of 1845 with Miss Stein's beauti ul abstraction on page 96 The subject disappears the ex itement with verbal movement remains

Edna St Vincent Millay's theatrical entrance upon the scene of American poetry in 1917 with Renascence" coin cided with the flood tide of the woman's suffrage movement [illegible] the feminist drive for social and sexual equality [illegible] s and sonnets have all the [illegible]

[illegible] of 19 [illegible] horrible example [illegible] a good cause

The verse of Elinor Wylie and Louise Bogan carried to

new elevations the metaphysical and classical tendenci of the day Mrs Wylie with the greater range of the two, exploited the same disillusionment with politics and religion that led to the rich poetry of elaboration and conceit in Donne's time The world of a mellow society and of intense personal relationships is given a timeless glaze to counter chaos beating on the door More abstractly Miss Bogan evokes the same shield out of her keenly observed inner life.

More in the cold tradition of Imagism but with a greater display of wit and intellect than its other poets Marianne Moore invented a startlingly original style in which prose cadences are held together by elaborate stanzas and occasional rhyme in consequence an age that prizes intellect and texture above other virtues of poetry has accorded her great influence

E E CUMMINGS When E E Cummings the son of a ...

tions Cummings returned after a brief appren... ...typically Amen... ...inforced He ... of the indi vidual in his own way and he has continued to for twenty five years without any diminishment of spontaneity—or knack of bedeviling and shocking the too-common Common Man Not content with Frost's ironical and at times querulous offensive against regimentation Cummings attack has been frontal—negatively through his ability to hoist the purveyors of standardized sham by their own petard positively by the never ageing celebration of himself as the epitome of youth curiosity and passion The hardboiled speech and addled typography of Cummings style serve to armor his sentiment and his eroticism *Internal combustion* has been his principle and an imagination that merges the thing described with the way of describing it his method

> I d rather learn from one bird how to sing
> Than teach ten thousand stars how not to dance

RANSOM AND STEVENS A chronicle of the second renaissance of American poetry would not be *complete* without mention of two poets whose in fluence on the poetry of today is ...

with
and
ly to
evens
ike, Ransom, and to a lesser extent its equally gifted
agues, Robert Penn Warren and Allen Tate elegizes

g between 9 and 5

VI Toward Integration

etween Chicago and Paris it was clear by 1930 which
sion of the second renaissance had won the day Two

ext is not over yet—followed strictly the rules laid down
Pound who had defined an image as an intellectual and
otional complex in an instant in time," and by Eliot, whose
asterpiece was constructed of hundreds of such images
d which could not be understood without disregarding
eir actual sequence in the poem in order to "perceive" them
multaneously

As early as 1920 however two questions were beginning
o trouble the more ambitious artists who had adopted the
ew style Since America was far from being a played-out
ivilization was in fact still a young one could such a rarified
non naturalistic technique alone convey its vitality? And
econdly was the main stream of American literature—what
ritics like Van Wyck Brooks and heretical magazines like
The Seven Arts were beginning to refer to as our "usable
past"—to be bypassed entirely

MACLEISH AND CRANE The year 1930 saw the publication of two significant poems Hart Crane a Middle Westerner of New England ancestry whose early lyrics carried Imagism and symbolism to new extremes,

and who had just returned from several unhappy months in Paris brought out *The Bridge*. Archibald MacLeish, whose background was somewhat similar, and whose first book exhibited an elegant lyricism subtly derivative of Pound and Eliot and their French contemporaries Apollinaire and St. Jean Perse, published the prelude to *Conquistador*. Both poems represented a strenuous effort to integrate the new style with America, and the fact that neither wholly succeeded could be attributed at least in part to the extreme complexity of the task.

MacLeish's approach to the problem, being the more superficial, produced the more seemingly harmonious result. By superimposing his fluid style first on the barbaric canvas of Cortez' conquest of Mexico and later (in *Frescoes for Mr. Rockefeller's City*, *Public Speech* and *America Was Promises*) on three typical phases of the Roosevelt New Deal, he was able with great skill to create the illusion of symbolist poetry at home in extraverted America and in the service of reform. Actually the only sea-change that took place in the poetry itself was that as it became more insistently hortatory it became less capable of conveying even its original *timbre*. As the public figure of MacLeish advanced from conquest to conquest, the poetry was left to catch up, improvise manifestoes and adapt itself to the man who was no longer the original poet. MacLeish had foreseen the dilemma in his justly famous "Invocation to the Social Muse," but acting in violation of his own warning he suffered as a poet the very fate he had predicted.

Young Crane had been among the readers of *The Seven Arts* in 1916, and very probably he had pondered Romain Rolland's Whitmanesque letter of exhortation to that short-lived magazine. Between the over-dense symbolism of "At Melville's Tomb," which he sold to *Poetry* magazine in 1926 after a month of explanatory correspondence with Harriet Monroe, and the complete though anguished mastery of "The Broken Tower," which was written in Mexico just before his suicide in 1932, Crane labored to construct a myth and a *language* which would "link certain chains of the past with certain chains and tendencies of the future." *The Bridge*, which he so described, was an heroic failure. Lacking the emotional stability and intellectual perseverance required to write a poem of such monumental scope, Crane's artistic integrity and intoxicated vision were nevertheless so outstanding, that he did achieve integration in snatches

OND PHASE: E FORTIES

John Wheelwright, the gifted Boston nonconformist who survived Crane by only eight years and who wrote the ers epitaph once at a public meeting asked Amy Lowell only question that is known to have embarrassed her ss Lowell" he said "how do you write poetry if you en t anything to say" The question still needs to be asked, the typical poem of the 40's communicates nothing but a od but it has at least been faced by some of the young ets who followed Crane—by James Agee and Karl Shapiro Theodore Roethke and Peter Viereck and Elizabeth ell

poems from a Famous Men Men had the

aterialism and spiritual poverty of America been damned ith such an intensity of indignation or countered with such combination of mystical identification and fierce self questioning The form of the book brought Agee into the ompany of those American poets from Thoreau and Whit man to Melville and Thomas Wolfe who have hovered in heir major work between prose and verse But the social consciousness of this extraordinary prose poem which grew out of a routine assignment to write an article on tenant farming for the magazine Fortune was a legitimate by product of the 3 s

Roethke like Kenneth Rexroth and Byron Vazakas and to a lesser extent Elizabeth Bishop derived his undressed and deceptively simple style from the cross grained imagist William Carlos Williams Williams had applied the method of arranging anti poetic material in prose cadences to a broader canvas than Marianne Moore ever faced using it to illumin a e by contrast the paradoxical aesthetic bareness and emotional poverty of the richest nation on earth

Karl Shapiro s restrained but smouldering poems of social protest exploited the same vein of paradox but in a more traditionally formal style derived in part from Auden The attitude of personal responsibility for national guilt that lay behind his war poems was in striking contrast to the evasive transference and despair that informed the characteristic poetry of the first World War Peter Viereck s war poems more relaxed in metre and drawing deliberately on the "higher vaudeville" of Whitman Lindsay and the folk singers prom

used to convey this healthily satirical message to a w... audience

The soul-searching strain of New England that had left American poetry when Eliot followed Henry James into exile took fire anew in the work of two Bostonians, Richard Eberhart and Robert Lowell Eberhart's "The Groundhog is strictly a confession of the puritan conscience, recalling vividly the passage in *Walden* in which Thoreau explains why he felt compelled to pass a dead horse—to be refreshed by the sight of inexhaustible vigor" Lowell, who as a conscientious objector and converted Catholic during the War "protested" his faith with the same violence of imagery and strictness of form employed by Edward Taylor, is both by temperament [illegible] these young poets [illegible] been heard since [illegible]

CONCLUSIONS It is of course too early to say whether any of these younger poets will fulfill their promise But it is not too early to see that the hopeful direction of poetry since the second World War is toward a recapture of the American heritage The wound that opened in the body of American poetry with Emerson s final rejection of Whitman may be healed by them The dualism that was symbolized by Henry James in that review of *Drum Taps* [illegible]

[illegible] democracy, which almost from colonial days gave American poetry its unique character, bodies forth with unashamed frankness and sufficient passion in his poetry alone It follows that the tragedy, the unfulfilled renown of our verse, is due in no small part to the failure of the poets of sensibility to accept that challenge and to the followers of Whitman for wrapping themselves in his Americanism

Edward Taylor, 1644(?)–1729

HUSWIFERY

Make me, O Lord, thy Spinning Wheele compleat
Thy Holy Worde my Distaff make for mee.
Make mine Affections thy Swift Flyers neate
And make my Soule thy holy Spoole to bee.
My Conversation make to be thy Reele
And reele the yarn thereon spun of thy Wheele.

Make me thy Loome then, knit therein this Twine:
And make thy Holy Spirit, Lord, winde quills:
Then weave the Web thyselfe. The yarn is fine.
Thine Ordinances make my Fulling Mills.
Then dy the same in Heavenly Colours Choice,
All pinkt with Varnish't Flowers of Paradise.

Then cloath therewith mine Understanding, Will,
Affections, Judgment, Conscience, Memory
My Words, and Actions, that their shine may fill
My wayes with glory and thee glorify.
Then mine apparell shall display before yee
That I am Cloathed in Holy robes for glory.

UPON WHAT BASE

…ver the Lath wherein
…?

Cast?
…mand?
Where stand the … ods?
Who Lac'de and Fillitted the earth so fine
With Rivers like green Ribbons Smaragdine?
Who made the Seas its Selvedge, and its locks
Like a Quilt Ball within a Silver Box?
Who Spread its Canopy? Or Curtains Spun?
Who in this Bowling Alley bowld the Sun?

Sir William he, snug as a flea
Lay all this time a snoring
Nor dream'd of harm as he lay warm,
In bed with Mrs Loring

Now in a fright he starts upright,
Awak'd by such a clatter;
He rubs both eyes, and boldly cries,
For God's sake, what's the matter?

At his bed-side he then espy'd,
Sir Erskine at command sir,
Upon one foot, he had one boot,
And th'other in his hand, sir

'Arise arise' Sir Erskine cries,
The rebels—more's the pity,
Without a boat are all afloat,
And rang'd before the city

The motley crew, in vessels new
With Satan for their guide sir
Pack'd up in bags, or wooden kegs
Come driving down the tide sir.

Therefore prepare for bloody war
These kegs must all be routed,
Or surely we despised shall be
And British courage doubted'

The royal band, now ready stand
All rang'd in dread array sir
With stomach stout to see it out
And make a bloody day sir

The cannons roar from shore to shore,
The small arms make a rattle
Since wars began I'm sure *no man*
E'er saw so strange a battle

The rebel dales the rebel vales
With rebel trees surrounded
The distant wood the hills and floods,
With rebel echoes sounded

The fish below swam to and fro
Attack'd from ev'ry quarter
Why sure, thought they, the dev

The kegs, 'tis said tho' strongly made,
Of rebel staves and hoops sir,
Could not oppose their powerful foes
The conqu'ring British troops sir

From morn to night these men of might
Display'd amazing courage
And when the sun was fairly down,
Retir'd to sup their porrage

An hundred men with each a pen,
Or more upon my word sir
It is most true would be too few,
Their valour to record sir

Such feats did they perform that day,
Against these wick'd kegs sir
That years to come if they get home
They'll make their boasts and brags sir

Philip Freneau, 1752–1832

EPISTLE

*From Dr. Franklin (deceased) to his Poetical Pa
on some of their absurd compliments*

Good Poets, who so full of pain,
Are you sincere—or do you feign?
Love for your tribe I never had,
Nor penned three stanzas good or bad

At funerals, sometimes, grief appears,
Where legacies have purchased tears,
Tis folly to be sad for nought,
From me you never gained a groat

To better trades I turned my views,
And never meddled with the muse,
Great things I did for rising states,
And kept the lightning from some pates

This grand discovery you adore it,
But ne'er will be the better for it
You still are subjects to those fires,
For Poets houses have no spires

Philosophers are famed for pride;
But, pray, be modest—when I died
No "sighs disturbed old ocean s bed,"
No "nature wept for Franklin dead'

That day, on which *I* left the coast,
A beggar man was also lost
If 'nature wept," you must agree,
She wept for *him* as well as *me*

There's reason even in telling lies,
In such profusion of her "sighs,"
She was too sparing of a tear—
In Carolina, all was clear·

And if there fell some snow and sleet
Why must it be my winding sheet?
Snows oft have cloathed the April plain,
Have melted and will meet again

Poets I pray you say no more,
Or say what Nature said before
That reason showed your pens direct,
Or else you pay me no respect

t reason be your constant rule
nd Nature trust me is no fool
When to the dust great men she brings
Make her do—SOME UNCOMMON THINGS."

DEATH

From *The House of Night*

Dark was the sky, and not one friendly star
Shone from the zenith or horizon clear
Mist sate upon the woods and darkness rode
In her black chariot with a wild career

And from the woods the late resounding note
Issued of the loquacious Whip-poor-will
Hoarse howling dogs and nightly roving wolves
Clamour'd from far off cliffs invisible

Rude from the wide extended Chesapeke
I heard the winds the dashing waves assail
And saw from far by picturing fancy form'd
The black ship travelling through the noisy gale

☆ ☆ ☆

C [illegible] way
V [illegible] onely round
[illegible] ss lay
And screams were heard from the distemper'd grou[illegible]

Nor look'd I back till to a far-off wood
Trembling with fear my weary feet had sped—
Dark was the night but at the enchanted dome
I saw the infernal windows flaming red

And from within the howls of Death I heard
Cursing the dismal night that gave him birth
Damning his ancient sire and mother sin
Who at the gates of hell accursed brought him f[illegible]

(For fancy gave to my enraptur'd soul
An eagle's eye with keenest glance to see
And bade those distant sounds distinctly roll
Which waking never had affected me)

☆ ☆ ☆

Though humbled now dishearten'd and distrest
Yet when admitted to the peaceful ground
With heroes kings and conquerors—I shall rest
Shall sleep as safely and perhaps as sound

Joel Barlow, 1754–1812

A CHOICE IN SPOONS

from *The Hasty Pudding*

With ease to enter and discharge the freight,
A bowl less concave but still more dilate,
Becomes the pudding best The shape the size,
A secret rests, unknown to vulgar eyes
Experienced feeders can alone impart

Which in two equal portions shall divide
The distance from the center to the side
Fear not to slaver 'tis no deadly sin —
Like the free Frenchman from your joyous chin
Suspend the ready napkin or like me,
Poise with one hand your bowl upon your knee;
Just in the zenith your wise head project,
Your full spoon rising in a line direct,
Bold as a bucket heed no drops that fall,
The wide mouthed bowl will surely catch them all!

Anonymous

THE WHORE ON THE SNOW CRUST

New England Broadside in Defence of Bundling, c. 178[illegible]

Adam at first was formed of dust,
    As we find of record,
And did receive a wife call'd Eve,
    By a creative word

From Adam's side a crooked bride,
    We find complete in form,
Ordained that they in bed might lay
    And keep each other warm

To court indeed they had no need,
    She was his wife at first,
And she was made to be his aid
    Whose origin was dust

Though Adam's wife destroyed his life
    In manner that is awful,
Yet marriage now we all allow
    To be both just and lawful

And nowadays there is two ways,
    Which of the two is right
To lie between sheets sweet and clean
    Or sit up all the night

But some suppose bundling in cloaths
    The good and wise doth vex
Then let me know which way to go
    To court the fairer sex

Whether they must be hugg'd and buss'd
    When sitting up all night,
Or whether they in bed may lay,
    Which doth reason invite?

Natures request is, give me rest,
    Our bodies seek repose
Night is the time, and 'tis no crime
    To bundle in our cloaths

Since in a bed a man and maid
May bundle and be chaste,
It doth no good to burn up wood,
It is a needless waste

Let coat and shift be turned adrift,
And breeches take their flight,
And honest man and virgin can
Lie quiet all the night,

But if there be dishonesty
Implanted in the mind
Breeches nor smocks nor scarce padlocks
The rage of lust can bind

Kate Nance and Sue proved just and true
Though bundling did practise
But Ruth beguil d and proved with child
Who bundling did despise

Whores will be whores and on the floors
Where many have been laid,
To set and smoke and ashes poke
Won t keep awake a maid

Bastards are not at all times got
In feather beds, we know
The strumpet s oath convinces both
Oftimes it is not so

One whorish dame I fear to name
Lest I should give offense
But in this town she was took down
Not more than eight months since

She was the first that on snow crust
I ever knew to gender
I ll hint no more about this whore
For fear I should offend her

Twas on the snow when Sol was low
And was in Capricorn
A child was got and it will not
Be long ere it is born

So unto those that do oppose
The bundling trade I say
Perhaps there s more got on the floor
Than any other way

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MITHRIDATES

I cannot spare water or wine,
Tobacco-leaf, or poppy, or rose,
From the earth poles to the Line
All between that works or grows,
Every thing is kin of mine

Give me agates for my meat,
Give me cantharids to eat,
From air and ocean bring me foods,
From all zones and altitudes,—

From all natures, sharp and slimy,
Salt and basalt, wild and tame
Tree and lichen, ape sea lion,
Bird, and reptile be my game

Ivy for my fillet band
Blinding dog wood in my hand
Hemlock for my sherbet cull me,
And the prussic juice to lull me;
Swing me in the upas boughs
Vampyre fanned, when I carouse.

Too long shut in strait and few,
Thinly dieted on dew
I will use the world, and sift it,
To a thousand humors shift it,
As you spin a cherry
O doleful ghosts and goblins merry!
O all you virtues methods mights
Means, appliances, delights,
Reputed wrongs and braggart rights,
Smug routine and things allowed,
Minorities things under cloud!
Hither take me use me fill me
Vein and artery though ye kill me!

THE SNOW STORM

Announced by all the trumpets of the sky
Arrives the snow and driving o'er the fields,
Seems nowhere to alight the whited air
Hides hills and woods the river, and the heaven,

Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1803–1882

HEROISM

Ruby Wine is drunk by knaves,
Sugar spends to fatten slaves,
Rose and vine-leaf deck buffoons,
Thunder-clouds are Jove's festoons,
Drooping oft in wreaths of dread,
Lightning knotted round his head,
The hero is not fed on sweets,
Daily his own heart he eats,
Chambers of the great are jails,
And head winds right for royal sails.

HAMATREYA

Bulkeley, Hunt, Willard, Hosmer, Meriam, Flint,
Possessed the land which rendered to their toil
Hay, corn, roots, hemp, flax, apples, wool, and wood
Each of these landlords walked amidst his farm,
Saying, 'Tis mine, my children's and my name's
How sweet the west wind sounds in my own trees!
How graceful climb those shadows on my hill!
I fancy these pure waters and the flags
Know me, as does my dog we sympathize,
And, I affirm, my actions smack of the soil'

Where are these men? Asleep beneath their grounds
[illegible] eir furrows plough
[illegible] ier boastful boys
[illegible] which is not theirs,
Who steer the plough, but cannot steer their feet
[illegible]
[illegible] e,
And misty lowland, where to go for peat
The land is well,—lies fairly to the south

'Tis good, when you have crossed the sea and back,
To find the sitfast acres where you left them.
Ah! the hot owner sees not Death who adds
Him to his land, a lump of mo

Go blindworm, go
Behold the famous States
Harrying Mexico
With rifle and with knife!

Or who with accent bolder,
Dare praise the freedom loving mountaineer?
I found by thee O rushing Contoocook!
And in thy valleys, Agiochook!
The jackals of the negro-holder

The God who made New Hampshire
Taunted the lofty land
With little men
Small bat and wren
House in the oak
If earth fire cleave
The upheaved land and bury the folk,
The southern crocodile would grieve
Virtue palters Right is hence
Freedom praised but hid
Funeral eloquence
Rattles the coffin lid

What boots thy zeal
O glowing friend,
That would indignant rend
The northland from the south?
Wherefore? to what good end?
Boston Bay and Bunker Hill
Would serve things still
Things are of the snake

The horseman serves the horse
The neatherd serves the neat
The merchant serves the purse
The eater serves his meat
'Tis the day of the chattel
Web to weave and corn to grind
Things are in the saddle
And ride mankind
There are two laws discrete
Not reconciled
Law for man and law for thing
The last builds town and fleet
But it runs wild
And doth the man unking

len's end
ouners feet
emates sit

In a tumultuous privacy of storm

Come see the north wind's masonry.
Out of an unseen quarry evermore
Furnished with tile, the fierce artificer
Curves his white bastions with projected roof
Round every windward stake, or tree, or door
work

On coop or kennel he hangs Parian wreaths,
A swan like form invests the hidden thorn
Fills up the farmer's lane from wall to wall,
Maugre the farmer's sighs, and at the gate
A tapering turret overtops the work.
And when his hours are numbered, and the world
Is all his own, retiring as he were not,
Leaves, when the sun appears, astonished Art
To mimic in slow structures, stone by stone,
Built in an age, the mad wind's night work,
The frolic architecture of the snow

ODE

Inscribed to W H Channing

Though loath to grieve
The evil time's sole patriot,
I cannot leave
My honeyed thought
For the priest's cant,
Or statesman's rant

If I refuse
My study for their politique,
Which at the best is trick,
The angry Muse
Puts confusion in my brain

But who is he that prates
Of the culture of mankind,
Of better arts and life?

TERMINUS

It is time to be old,
To take in sail —
The god of bounds,
Who sets to seas a shore,
Came to me in his fatal rounds,
And said No more!
No farther shoot
Thy broad ambitious branches and thy root.
Fancy departs no more invent,
Contract thy firmament
To compass of a tent
There's not enough for this and that,
Make thy option which of two,
Economize the failing river,
Not the less revere the Giver,
Leave the many and hold the few
Timely wise accept the terms
Soften the fall with wary foot,
A little while
Still plan and smile,
And —fault of novel germs,—
Mature the unfallen fruit
Curse if thou wilt thy sire,
Bad husbands of their fires
Who when they gave thee breath,
Failed to bequeath
The needful sinew stark as once,
The Baresark marrow to thy bones,
But left a legacy of ebbing veins
Inconstant heat and nerveless reins —
Amid the Muses left thee deaf and dumb,
Amid the gladiators halt and numb'

As the bird trims her to the gale,
I trim myself to the storm of time,
I man the rudder reef the sail
Obey the once at eve obeyed at prime
Lowly faithful banish fear,
Right onward drive unharmed
The port well worth the cruise, is near,
And every wave is charmed'

But it m

'Tis fit the forest fall,
The steep be graded,
The mountain tunnelled,
The sand shaded,
The orchard planted,
The glebe tilled,
The prairie granted,
The *steamer built*

Let man serve law for man,
Live for friendship, live for love,
For truth's and harmony's behoof,

Yet do not I implore
The wrinkled shopman to my sounding woods
Nor bid the unwilling senator
Ask votes of thrushes in the solitudes
Every one to his chosen work,
Foolish hands may mix and mar;
Wise and sure the issues are
Round they roll till dark is light,
Sex to sex, and even to odd,
The *over-god*
Who marries Right to Might,
Who peoples, unpeoples,
He who exterminates
Races by stronger races
Black by white faces,
Knows to bring honey
Out of the lion,
Grafts gentlest scion
On pirate and Turk

The Cossack eats Poland,
Like stolen fruit,
Her last noble is ruined,
Her last poet mute,
Straight, into double band
The victors divide,
Half for freedom strike and stand,
The astonished Muse finds thousands at her side

me they here? What burst of Christian hate,
t persecution merciless and blind,
ver the sea—that desert desolate—
e Ishmaels and Hagars of mankind?

ned in narrow streets and lanes obscure,
tto and Judenstrass in mirk and mire,
t in the school of patience to endure
life of anguish and the death of fire

ir lives long with the unleavened bread
l bitter herbs of exile and its fears
asting famine of the heart that fed
l slaked its thirst with Marah of their tears

to street,

Christian feet

and humiliation hand in hand
alked with them through the world where'er they went,
npled and beaten were they as the sand
d yet unshaken as the continent,

l thus forever with reverted look
he mystic volume of the world they read
ling it backward like a Hebrew book,
ill life became a Legend of the Dead

ah! what once has been shall be no more!
The groaning earth in travail and in pain
ngs forth its races but does not restore
And the dead nations never rise again

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 1807–188

THE JEWISH CEMETERY AT NEWPORT

How strange it seems! These Hebrews in their graves,
Close by the street of this fair seaport town,
Silent beside the never-silent waves,
At rest in all this moving up and down

The trees are white with dust, that o'er their sleep
Wave their broad curtains in the south wind's breat
While underneath such leafy tents they keep
The long mysterious Exodus of Death

And these sepulchral stones, so old and brown,
That pave with level flags their burial place,
Seem like the tablets of the Law, thrown down
And broken by Moses at the mountain's base.

The very names recorded here are strange,
Of foreign accent, and of different climes,
Alvares and Rivera interchange
With Abraham and Jacob of old times

'Blessed be God! for he created Death!'
The mourner said and Death is rest and peace",
Then added, in the certainty of faith,
"And giveth Life that never more shall cease'

Closed are the portals of their Synagogue,
No Psalms of David now the silence break,
No Rabbi reads the ancient Decalogue
In the grand dialect the Prophets spake

Gone are the living, but the dead remain,
And not neglected, for a hand unseen,
Scattering its bounty, like a summer rain,
Still keeps their graves and their remembrance green

ey lived in narrow streets and lanes obscure,
Ghetto and Judenstrass, in mirk and mire;
ught in the school of patience to endure
The life of anguish and the death of fire

their lives long, with the unleavened bread
And bitter herbs of exile and its fears,
e wasting famine of the heart that fed
And slaked its thirst with Marah of their tears.

athema maranatha! was the cry

feet

de and humiliation hand in hand
Walked with them through the world where'er they went,
ampled and beaten were they as the sand
And yet unshaken as the continent,

saw reflected in the coming time

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ah! what once has been shall be no more!
The groaning earth in travail and in pain
ngs forth its races but does not restore
And the dead nations never rise again

John Greenleaf Whittier, 1807–1892

THE SUN THAT BRIEF DECEMBER DAY

from *Snow-Bound*

The sun that brief December day
Rose cheerless over hills of gray,
And, darkly circled, gave at noon
A sadder light than waning moon
Slow tracing down the thickening sky
Its mute and ominous prophecy,
A portent seeming less than threat,
It sank from sight before it set
A chill no coat, however stout,
Of homespun stuff could quite shut out,
A hard dull bitterness of cold,
That checked, mid vein the circling race
[illegible]
[illegible] oar
Of Ocean on his wintry shore,
And felt the strong pulse throbbing there
Beat with low rhythm our inland air

Meanwhile we did our nightly chores,—
Brought in the wood from out of doors,
Littered the stalls, and from the mows
Raked down the herd s grass for the cows
Heard the horse whinnying for his corn,
And, sharply clashing horn on horn,
Impatient down the stanchion rows
The cattle shake their walnut bows
While, peering from his early perch
Upon the scaffold s pole of birch,
The cock his crested helmet bent
And down his querulous challenge sent

☆ ☆ ☆

Oliver Wendell Holmes, 1809–1894

LATTER-DAY WARNINGS

from *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*

When legislators keep the law,
  When banks dispense with bolts and locks,
When berries, whortle—rasp—and straw—
  Grow bigger *downwards* through the box,—

When he that selleth house or land
  Shows leak in roof or flaw in right,—
When haberdashers choose the stand
  Whose window hath the broadest light,—

When preachers tell us all they think,
  And party leaders all they mean,—
When what we pay for that we drink,
  From real grape and coffee-bean,—

When lawyers take what they would give,
  And doctors give what they would take,—
When city fathers eat to live
  Save when they fast for conscience' sake,—

When one that hath a horse on sale
  Shall bring his merit to the proof,
Without a lie for every nail
  That holds the iron on the hoof,—

Wh [illegible]

When Cuba's weeds have quite forgot
  The power of suction to resist
And claret bottles harbor not
  Such dimples as would hold your fist,—

When publishers no longer steal
  And pay for what they stole before,—
When the first locomotive's wheel
  Rolls through the Hoosac tunnel's bore;—

Till [illegible]

Bu [illegible]

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Rose cheerless over hills of gray,
And, darkly circled, gave at noon
A sadder light than waning moon
Slow tracing down the thickening sky
Its mute and ominous prophecy,
A portent seeming less than threat,
It sank from sight before it set
A chill no coat, however stout,
Of homespun stuff could quite shut out,
A hard dull bitterness of cold,
That checked mid vein the circling race
Of life blood in the sharpened face,
The coming of the snow storm told
The wind blew east, we heard the roar
Of Ocean on his wintry shore,
And felt the strong pulse throbbing there
Beat with low rhythm our inland air

Meanwhile we did our nightly chores,—
Brought in the wood from out of doors
Littered the stalls and from the mows
Raked down the herd's grass for the cows
Heard the horse whinnying for his corn,
And sharply clashing horn on horn,
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  Whose window hath the broadest light,—

When preachers tell us all they think,
  And party leaders all they mean,—
When what we pay for, that we drink,
  From real grape and coffee-bean,—

When lawyers take what they would give,
  And doctors give what they would take,—
When city fathers eat to live
  Save when they fast for conscience' sake,—

When one that hath a horse on sale
  Shall bring his merit to the proof,
Without a lie for every nail
  That holds the iron on the hoof,—

When in the usual place for rips
  Our gloves are stitched with special care,
And guarded well the whalebone tips
  Where first umbrellas need repair,—

When Cuba's weeds have quite forgot
  The power of suction to resist,
And claret bottles harbor not
  Such dimples as would hold your fist,—

When publishers no longer steal
  And pay for what they stole before,—
When the first locomotive's wheel
  Rolls through the Hoosac tunnel's bore,—

Till then let Cumming blaze away
  And Miller's saints blow up the globe;
But when you see that blessed day
  Then order your ascension robe!

SONNET—TO SCIENC[illegible]

Science! true daughter of Old Time th[illegible] art
  Who alterest all things with thy [illegible] eyes
Why preyest thou thus upon the poet's heart,
  Vulture, whose wings are dull realities?
How should he love thee? or how deem thee wise,
  Who wouldst not leave him in his wandering
To seek for treasure in the jewelled skies
  Albeit he soared with an undaunted wing?
Hast thou not dragged Diana from her car?
  And driven the Hamadryad from the wood
To seek a shelter in some happier star?
  Hast thou not torn the Naiad from her flood,
The Elfin from the green grass, and from me
  The summer dream beneath the tamarind tree?

THE CITY IN THE SEA

Lo! Death has reared himself a throne
[illegible]
Have gone to their eternal rest
There shrines and palaces and towers
(Time-eaten towers that tremble not!)
Resemble nothing that is ours
Around, by lifting winds forgot,
Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.

[illegible] come down
[illegible] own,
[illegible]
Gleams up the pinnacles far and free—
Up domes—up spires—up kingly halls—

Up fanes—up Babylon-like walls—
Up shadowy long-forgotten bowers
Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers—
Up many and many a marvellous shrine
Whose wreathéd friezes intertwine
The viol, the violet, and the vine

Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie
So blend the turrets and shadows there
That all seem pendulous in air
While from a proud tower in the town
Death looks gigantically down

☆ ☆ ☆

THE HAUNTED PALACE

In the greenest of our valleys
By good angels tenanted
Once a fair and stately palace—
Radiant palace—reared its head
In the monarch Thought's dominion
It stood there
Never seraph spread a pinion
Over fabric half so fair!

Banners yellow, glorious, golden
On its roof did float and flow
(This—all this—was in the olden
Time long ago.)
And every gentle air that dallied
In that sweet day
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
A wingéd odor went away

Wanderers in that happy valley
Through two luminous windows saw
Spirits moving musically
To a lute's well-tuned law
Round about a throne where, sitting,
(Porphyrogene!)
In state his glory well befitting,
The ruler of the realm ...

SONNET—TO SCIENC

Science! true daughter of Old Time thou art!
Who alterest all things with thy peering eyes.
Why preyest thou thus upon the poet's heart,
Vulture, whose wings are dull realities?
How should he love thee? or how deem thee wise,
Who wouldst not leave him in his wandering
To seek for treasure in the jewelled skies,
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To seek a shelter in some happier star?
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The Elfin from the green grass, and from me
The summer dream beneath the tamarind tree?

THE CITY IN THE SEA

Lo! Death has reared himself a throne
In a strange city lying alone
Far down within the dim West,
vorst and the be

The melancholy w ters l e

No rays from the holy Heaven come down
On the long night-time of that town;
But light from out the lurid sea
Streams up the turrets silently—
Gleams up the pinnacles far and free—
Up domes—up spires—up kingly halls—

Up fanes—up Babylon-like walls—
   Up shadowy long-forgotten bowers
Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers—
Up many and many a marvellous shrine
Whose wreathéd friezes intertwine
The viol, the violet, and the vine.

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In the greenest of our valleys
   By good angels tenanted
Once a fair and stately palace—
   Radiant palace—reared its head
In the monarch Thought's dominion,
   It stood there
Never seraph spread a pinion
   Over fabric half so fair

Banners yellow, glorious, golden
   On its roof did float and flow
(This—all this—was in the olden
   Time long ago
And every gentle air that dallied
   In that sweet day
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
   A winged odor went away

Wanderers in that happy valley
   Through two luminous windows, saw
Spirits moving musically
   To a lute's well tuned law
Round about a throne where sitting,
   Porphyrogene!
In state his glory well befitting,
   The ruler of the realm was seen

And all with pearl and ruby glowing
Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing
And sparkling evermore,
A troop of Echoes, whose sweet duty
Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
The wit and wisdom of their king

But evil things in robes of sorrow,
Assailed the monarch's high estate,
(Ah, let us mourn!—for never morrow
Shall dawn upon him desolate!)
And round about his home the glory
That blushed and bloomed
Is but a dim remembered story
Of the old time entombed

And travellers, now, within that valley,
Through the red litten windows see
Vast forms that move fantastically
To a discordant melody,
While, like a ghastly rapid river,
Through the pale door
A hideous throng rush out forever,
And laugh—but smile no more

Jones Very, 1813–1880

THY BROTHER'S BLOOD

I have no brother They who meet me now
Offer a hand with their own wills defiled,
And while they wear a smooth unwrinkled brow,
[illegible] truth can never be beguiled
[illegible] the guilt —
[illegible]
[illegible]
Abel's red blood upon [illegible]
And by thy tongue it cannot be denied.
I hear not with the ear —the heart doth tell
Its secret deeds to me untold before
Go all its hidden plunder quickly sell
Then shalt thou cleanse thee from thy brother's gore,
Then will I take thy gift that bloody stain
Shall not be seen upon thy hand again

And all with pearl and ruby glowing
    Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flow
    And sparkling evermore,
A troop of Echoes, whose sweet duty
    Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
    The wit and wisdom of their king.

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    Assailed the monarch's high estate,
(Ah, let us mourn!—for never morrow
    Shall dawn upon him, desolate!)
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And travellers, now, within that valley,
    Through the red litten windows see
Vast forms that move fantastically
    To a discordant melody,
While, like a ghastly rapid river,
    Through the pale door
A hideous throng rush out forever,
    And laugh—but smile no more.

Drip drip the trees for all the country round
  And richness rare distills from every bough,
The wind alone it is makes every sound
  Shaking down crystals on the leaves below

For shame the sun will never show himself,
  Who could not with his beams e'er melt me so;
My dripping locks,—they would become an elf,
  Who in a beaded coat does gayly go

HAZE

Woof of the sun ethereal gauze
Woven of Nature's richest stuffs,
Visible heat air water and dry sea,
Last conquest of the eye
Toil of the day displayed sun-dust
Aerial surf upon the shores of earth,
Ethereal estuary frith of light
Breakers of air billows of heat
Fine summer spray on inland seas
Bird of the sun transparent winged
Owlet of noon soft pinioned
From heath or stubble rising without song,—
Establish thy serenity o'er the fields

CONSCIENCE

Conscience is instinct bred in the house,
Feeling and Thinking propagate the sin
By an unnatural breeding in and in
I say Turn it out doors
Into the moors
I love a life whose plot is simple
And does not thicken with every pimple
A soul so sound no sickly conscience binds it
That makes the universe no worse than 't finds it
I love an earnest soul
Whose mighty joy and sorrow
Are not drowned in a bowl
And brought to life to-morrow
That lives one tragedy

Henry David Thoreau, 1817–1862

THE SUMMER RAIN

My books I'd fain cast off, I cannot read,
  'Twixt every page my thoughts go stray at large
Down in the meadow, where is richer feed,
  And will not mind to hit their proper targe.

Plutarch was good, and so was Homer too,
  Our Shakespeare's life were rich to live again,
What Plutarch read, that was not good nor true,
  Nor Shakespeare's books, unless his books were me

Here while I lie beneath this walnut bough,
  What care I for the Greeks or for Troy town,
If juster battles are enacted now
  Between the ants upon this hummock's crown?

Bid Homer wait till I the issue learn,
  If red or black the gods will favor most,
Or yonder Ajax will the phalanx turn,
  Struggling to heave some rock against the host.

Tell Shakespeare to attend some leisure hour,
  For now I've business with this drop of dew,
And see you not, the clouds prepare a shower,—
  I'll meet him shortly when the sky is blue.

This bed of herdsgrass and wild oats was spread
  Last year with nicer skill than monarchs use,
A clover tuft is pillow for my head,
  And violets quite overtop my shoes

[illegible]

  Some in the pool, some in the flowerbell

I am well drenched upon my bed of oats,
  But see that globe come rolling down its ste
Now like a lonely planet there it floats,
  And now it sinks into my garment's hem.

William Ellery Channing, 1818–1901

AND HERE THE HERMIT SAT, AND TOLD HIS BEADS

And here the hermit sat and told his beads,
And stroked his flowing locks red as the fire,
Summed up his tale of moon and sun and star
How blest are we he deemed who so comprise
The essence of the whole and of ourselves,
As in a Venice flask of lucent shape
Ornate of gilt Arabic and inscribed
With Suras from Time's Koran live and pray,
More than half grateful for the glittering prize,
Human existence! If I note my powers
So poor and frail a toy the insect's prey,
Itched by a berry festered by a plum
The very air infecting my thin frame
With its malarial trick whom every day
Rushes upon and hustles to the grave
Yet raised by the great love that broods o'er all
Responsive to a height beyond all thought

He ended as the nightly prayer and fast
Summoned him inward But I sat and heard
The night hawks rip the air above my head
Till midnight o'er the warm dry dewless rocks
And saw the blazing dog star droop his fire,
And the low comet trailing to the south
Bend his reverted gaze and leave us free

And not seventy,
A conscience worth keeping,
Laughing not weeping,
A conscience wise and steady,
And for ever ready,
Not changing with events,
Dealing in compliments,
A conscience exercised about
Large things, where one *may* doubt.
I love a soul not all of wood,
Predestinated to be good,
But true to the backbone
Unto itself alone,
And false to none,
Born to its own affairs
Its own joys and own cares
By whom the work which God begun
Is finished, and not undone,
Taken up where he left off,
Whether to worship or to scoff,
If not good why then evil
If not good god, good devil
Goodness!—you hypocrite come out of that,
Live your life, do your work, then take your hat
I have no patience towards
Such conscientious cowards
Give me simple laboring folk,
Who love their work,
Whose virtue is a song
To cheer God along

Anonymous

SOMETIMES I FEEL LIKE AN EAGLE IN DE AIR

Negro Spiritual, Nineteenth Century

Sometimes I feel like an eagle in de air
Some-a dese mornins bright an fair
I'm goin to lay down my heavy load
Goin to spread my wings an cleave de air
You may bury me in de east,
You may bury me in de west
But I'll hear de trumpet sound
In a dat mornin

James Russell Lowell, 1819–1891

EMERSON

From *A Fable for Critics*

T
Wh
To
Carlyle's the more burly, but E is the rarer,
He sees fewer objects, but clearlier, trulier,
If C 's as original, E s more peculiar,
That he's more of a man you might say of the one,
Of the other he's more of an Emerson
C 's the Titan, as shaggy of mind as of limb —
E the clear-eyed Olympian, rapid and slim,
The one's two thirds Norseman, the other half Greek,
Where the one's most abounding the other's to seek,
C 's generals require to be seen in the mass,—
E 's specialties gain if enlarged by the glass
C gives nature and God his own fits of the blues
And rims common sense things with mystical hues,—
E sits in a mystery calm and intense
And looks coolly around him with sharp common sense,
C shows you how every-day matters unite
With the dim transdiurnal recesses of night,—
While E, in a plain, preternatural way,
Makes mysteries matters of mere every day,
C draws all his characters quite à la Fuseli,—
Not sketching their bundles of muscles and thews illy,
He paints with a brush so untamed and profuse,
They seem nothing but bundles of muscles and thews,
E is rather like Flaxman, lines strait and severe
And a colorless outline, but full, round, and clear,—
To the men he thinks worthy he frankly accords
The design of a white marble statue in words
C labors to get at the centre, and then
Take a reckoning from there of his actions and men,
E calmly assumes the said centre as granted,
And, given himself, has whatever is wanted

Herman Melville, 1819–1891

THE MARCH INTO VIRGINIA

Ending in the First Manassas (July, 1861)

Did all the lets and bars appear
  To every just or larger end,
Whence should come the trust and cheer?
  Youth must its ignorant impulse end—
Age finds place in the rear
  All wars are boyish and are fought by boys,
The champions and enthusiasts of the state;
  Turbid ardours and vain joys
    Not barrenly abate—
  Stimulants to the power mature,
    Preparatives of fate

Who here forecasteth the event?
What heart but spurns at precedent
And warnings of the wise
Contemned foreclosures of surprise?
The banners play the bugles call
The air is blue and prodigal
    No berrying party pleasure wooed,
No picnic party in the May
Ever went less loth than they
    Into that leafy neighborhood
In Bacchic glee they file toward Fate,
Moloch's uninitiate
Expectancy and glad surmise
Of battle's unknown mysteries
All they feel is this 'tis glory
A rapture sharp though transitory
Yet lasting in belaurelled story
So they gaily go to fight,
Chatting left and laughing right

But some who this blithe mood present,
    As on in lightsome files they fare,
Shall die experienced ere three days are spent—
    Perish enlightened by the vollied glare;
Or shame survive, and like to adamant
    The throes of Second Manassas share

Julia Ward Howe, 1819–1910

THE BATTLE HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of
are stored,
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible
sword,
His truth is marching on

I have seen Him in the watch fires of a hundred ci
camps
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dew
damps,
I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and fl
lamps,
His day is marching on

I have read a fiery gospel, writ in burnished rows of
"As ye deal with my contemners, so with you my
shall deal,
Let the Hero born of woman, crush the serpent wit
heel,
Since God is marching on'

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never
retreat
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgm
seat
Oh, be swift my soul to answer Him! be jubilant,
feet!
Our God is marching on

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the

His watch-chain with love's jewelled tokens abounding,
Curls ambrosial shaking out odours,
Waltzing along the batteries, astounding
The gunner glum and the grim-visaged loaders.

Wife, where be all these blades, I wonder,
Pennoned fine fellows, so strong, so gay?
Never their colours with a dip dived under;
Have they hauled them down in a lack-lustre day,
Or beached their boats in the Far, Far Away?

☆ ☆ ☆

FATHER MAPPLE'S HYMN

From *Moby Dick*

The ribs and terrors in the whale
Arched over me a dismal gloom,
While all God's sunlit waves rolled by
And left me deepening down to doom.

I saw the opening maw of hell
With endless pains and sorrows there;
Which none but they that feel can tell—
Oh, I was plunging to despair.

In black distress, I called my God
When I could scarce believe Him mine,
He bowed his ear to my complaints—
No more the whale did me confine.

With speed He flew to my relief
As on a radiant dolphin borne;
Awful, yet bright as lightning shone
The face of my Deliverer God.

My song for ever shall record
That terrible, that joyful hour;
I give the glory to my God,
His all the mercy and the power.

WHERE'S COMMANDER ALL-A-TANTO?

From *Bridegroom Dick*

Where's Commander All a Tanto?
Where's Orlop Bob singing up from below?
Where's Rhyming Ned? has he spun his last canto?
Where's Jewsharp Jim? Where's Rigadoon Joe?
Ah, for the music over and done,
The band all dismissed save the droned trombone!
Where's Glen o' the gun room, who loved Hot Scotch-
Glen, prompt and cool in a perilous watch?
Where's flaxen haired Phil? a grey lieutenant?
Or rubicund flying a dignified pennant?
But where sleeps his brother?—the cruise it was o'er,
But ah, for death's grip that welcomed him ashore!
Where's Sid, the cadet, so frank in his brag
Whose toast was audacious—*Here's Sid, and Sid's fl*
Like holiday craft that have sunk unknown,
May a lark of a lad go lonely down?
Who takes the census under the sea?
Can others like old ensigns be,
Bunting I hoisted to flutter at the gaff—
Rags in end that once were flags
Gallant streaming from the staff?
Such scurvy doom could the chances deal
To Top Gallant Harry and Jack Genteel?
Lo Genteel Jack in hurricane weather,
Shagged like a bear, like a red lion roaring,

. . .

'Oui, mademoiselle—Ma chère amie!

'Twas Jack got up the ball at Naples,

barber,
le Boreas,
dames in rout,

A flinging his shapely foot all about.

l n and coverd by to-day s foundation of to-day s,
d deceasd through time her voice by Castaly's foun
tn
at the broken l ppd Sphynx in Egypt silent all those
century baffling tombs,
ed for aye the epics of Asia s, Europe s helmeted war
nors ended the prim tive call of the muses,
hopes call for ever closed Clio Melpomene Thalia
dead
led the stately rhythmus of Una and Oriana ended the
quest of the holy Graal
usalem a handful of ashes blown by the wind extinct,
e Crusaders streams of shadowy midnight troops sped
with the sunrise
ads Tancred utterly gone Charlemagne Rolland
Oliver gone,
lmerin ogre, departed vanish d the turrets that Usk from

id Lancelot
like an ex

issd passd for us, for ever pass d that once so mighty
world now vo d inanimate phantom world
mbroiderd dazzling foreign world with all its gorgeous
legends myths
ts kings and castles proud its priests and warlike lords and
courtly dames
assd to its charnel vault coffin d with crown and armor on
lazon d with Shakespeare s purple page
nd d rged by Tennyson s sweet sad rhyme

l say I see my friends

u d not a b t by drain pipe, gasometers artificial ferti
lizers,
Smil ng and pleas d with palpable intent to stay
She s here install d amid the kitchen ware!

Walt Whitman, 1819–1892

COME MUSE MIGRATE FROM GREECE AND IONIA

From *Song of the Exposition*

Come Muse migrate from Greece and Ionia,
Cross out please those immensely overpaid accounts,
That matter of Troy and Achilles' wrath, and Aeneas',
   seus wanderings,
Placard Removed and 'To Let' on the rocks of your
   Parnassus,
Repeat at Jerusalem, place the notice high on Jaffas
   and on Mount Moriah
The same on the walls of your German, French, and
   ish castles and Italian collections,
For know a better, fresher, busier sphere, a wide, u
   domain awaits, demands you

☆ ☆ ☆

Responsive to our summons
Or rather to her long nurs'd inclination,
Join'd with an irresistible, natural gravitation,
She comes! I hear the rustling of her gown,
I scent the odor of her breath's delicious fragrance,
I mark her step divine, her curious eyes a turning rollı
Upon this very scene

The dame of dames! can I believe then,
Those ancient temples sculptures classic, could nor
   them retain her?
Nor shades of Virgil and Dante, nor myriad mem
   poems, old associations magnetise and hold
   her?
But that she's left them all—and here?
Yes if you will allow me to say so,
I my friends, if you do not, can plainly see her,
The same undying soul of earth's, activity's, beauty's,
   ism's expression,
Out from her evolutions hither come, ended the strat
   her former themes

rns his quid of tobacco while his eyes blur with the
manuscript

race

e western turkey-shooting draws old and young, some
lean on their rifles, some sit on logs,
t from the crowd steps the marksman takes his position,
levels his piece
e groups of newly come immigrants cover the wharf or
levee
the woolly pates hoe in the sugar field the overseer views
them from

ouch lies awake in the cedar roof'd garret and harks to
the musical rain,
Wolverine sets traps on the creek that helps fill the
Huron
squaw wrapt in her yellow hemm'd cloth is offering
moccasins and bead bags for sale,
connoisseur peers along the exhibition gallery with half
shut eyes bent sideways,
the deck hands make fast the steamboat the plank is
thrown for the shore-going passengers
young sister holds out the skein while the elder sister
winds it off in a ball and stops now and then for
the knots,
e one year wife is recovering and happy having a week
ago borne her first child
e clean hair'd Yankee girl works with her sewing machine
or in the factory or mill
he paving man leans on his two-handed rammer, the re-
porter's lead flies swiftly over the note-book, the
sign painter is lettering with blue and gold
he canal boy trots on the tow path the book keeper counts
shoemaker waxes his thread,

eekers go through the regions of the Red river or
through those drain'd by the Tennessee, or through
those of the Arkansas,
rches shine in the dark that hangs on the Chattahooche
or Altamahaw,
iarchs sit at supper with sons and grandsons and great
grandsons around them
walls of adobie, in canvas tents, rest hunters and trappers
after their day's sport
e city sleeps and the country sleeps
living sleep for their time, the dead sleep for their time
old husband sleeps by his wife and the young husband
sleeps by his wife
l these tend inward to me, and I tend outward to them,
l such as it is to be of these more or less I am
l of these one and all I weave the song of myself

☆

the poet of the Body and I am the poet of the Soul
pleasures of heaven are with me and the pains of hell
are with me
e first I graft and increase upon myself, the latter I trans
late into a new tongue
m the poet of the woman the same as the man
d I say it is as great to be a woman as to be a man
d I say there is nothing greater than the mother of men

hant the chant of dilation or pride
have had ducking and deprecating about enough,
ow that the size is only development
ve you outstript the rest? are you the President
s a trifle, they will more than arrive there every one, and
still pass on
n he that walks with the tender and growing night,
l to the earth and sea half held by the night

s close bare-bosom'd night—press close magnetic nourish
ing night
t of south winds—night of the large few stars!
l nodding night—mad naked summer night

mile O voluptuous cool-breath'd earth
arth of the slumbering and liquid trees!
arth of departed sunset—earth of the mountains misty-topt!
arth of the vitreous pour of the full moon just tinged with

ekers go through the regions of the Red river or
through those drain'd by the Tennessee, or through
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s shine in the dark that hangs on the Chattahooche
or Altamahaw,
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grandsons around them
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after their day's sport

sleeps by his wife
these tend inward to me and I tend outward to them,
such as it is to be of these more or less I am
of these one and all I weave the song of myself



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arth of the slumbering and liquid trees!
arth of departed sunset—earth of the mountains misty topt!
arth of the vitreous pour of the full moon just tinged with

d I incorporate gneiss, coal, long-threaded moss, fruits,
grains, esculent roots
I am stucco'd with quadrupeds and birds all over,
I have distanced what is behind me for good reasons
call anything back again when I desire it

vain the speeding or shyness,
vain the plutonic rocks send their old heat against my
approach,
vain the mastodon retreats beneath its own powder'd
bones,
vain objects stand leagues off and assume manifold
shapes
vain the ocean settling in hollows and the great monsters
lying low
vain the buzzard houses herself with the sky
[illegible]

follow quickly I ascend to the nest in the fissure of the
cliff

☆ ☆ ☆

he spotted hawk swoops by and accuses me he complains
of my gab and my loitering

too am not a bit tamed I too am untranslatable
sound my barbaric yawp over the roofs of the world

The last scud of day holds back for me
It flings my likeness after the rest and true as any on the
shadow'd wilds
It coaxes me to the vapor and the dusk

I depart as air I shake my white locks at the runaway sun
I effuse my flesh in eddies and drift it in lacy jags

I bequeath myself to the dirt to grow from the grass I love,
If you want me again look for me under your boot-soles.

You will hardly know who I am or what I mean
But I shall be good health to you nevertheless
And filter and fibre your blood

[illegible] uraged

ing my vigil strange with that vigil of night and bat
tlefeld dim
l for boy of responding kisses (never again on earth
respond ng)
, , , ... I ... fo get how

well in

his blanket
d buned him where he fell

FACING WEST FROM CALIFORNIA S SHORES

acing west from California s shores
quiring, treless seeking what is yet unfound
a child very old over waves towards the house of
maternity the land of migrations look afar
ook off the shores of my Western sea the circle almost
circled
For starting westward from Hindustan from the vales of
Kashmere
From Asia from the north from the God the sage and
the hero
From the south from the flowery peninsulas and the spice
islands
Long having wanderd since round the earth having wan
derd
Now I face home again very pleasd and joyous
(But where is what I started for so long ago?
And why is it yet unfound)

AS I EBB D WITH THE OCEAN OF LIFE

1

As I ebbd with the ocean of life
As I wended the shores I know
As I walkd where the ripples continually wash you Pau
manok
Where they rustle up hoarse and sibilant
Where the fierce old mother endlessly cries for her cas

I musing late in the autumn day gazing off southwar
Held by this electric self out of the pride of which I u
poems
Was seiz d by the spirit that trails in the lines underl
The rim the sediment that stands for all the water
all the land of the globe

Fascinated my eyes reverting from the south dropt
follow those slender windrows
Chaff straw splinters of wood weeds and the sea glu
Scum scales from shining rocks leaves of salt lettuce
by the tide
Miles walking the sound of breaking waves the o
side of me
Paumanok there and then as I thought the old thou
of likenesses
These you presented to me you fish shaped island
As I wended the shores I know
As I walk d with that electric self seeking types

2

As I wend to the shores I know not
As I list to the dirge the voices of men and wor
wreck d
As I inhale the impalpable breezes that set in upon me
As the ocean so mysterious rolls toward me closer
closer
I too but signify at the utmost a little wash d up drift
A few sands and dead leaves to gather
Gather and merge myself as part of the sands and dr

O baffled balk d bent to the very earth
Oppress d with myself that I have dared to open
mouth
Aware now that amid all that blab whose echoes re
upon me I have not once had the least i
who or what I am
But that before all my arrogant poems the real Me stan
yet untouch d untold altogether unreach d
Withdrawn far mocking me with mock-congratulat
signs and bows
With peals of distant ironical laughter at every word
have written
Pointing in silence to these songs and then to the sa
beneath

I perceive I have not really understood anything, not a
single object, and that no man ever can
Nature here in sight of the sea taking advantage of me
to dart upon me and sting me
Because I have dared to open my mouth to sing at all

3

You oceans both, I close with you
We murmur alike reproachfully rolling sands and drift
knowing not why
These little shreds indeed standing for you and me and
all

You friable shore with trails of debris,
You fish-shaped island, I take what is underfoot,
What is yours is mine, my father

too Paumanok,
too have bubbled up, floated the measureless float, and
been wash'd on your shores
too am but a trail of drift and debris
too leave little wrecks upon you, you fish-shaped island

throw myself upon your breast, my father
cling to you so that you cannot unloose me
hold you so firm till you answer me something

iss me, my father
ouch me with your lips as I touch those I love
reathe to me while I hold you close the secret of the
murmuring I envy

4

bb, ocean of life (the flow will return)
ease not your moaning you fierce old mother,
ndlessly cry for your castaways, but fear not, deny not
me
ustle not up so hoarse and angry against my feet as I
touch you or gather from you

mean tenderly by you and all
gather for myself and for this phantom looking down
where we lead, and following me and mine

e and mine, loose windrows, little corpses,
oth, snowy white, and bubbles
See, from my dead lips the ooze exuding at last

I musing late in the autumn day gazing off southward
Held by this electric self out of the pride of which I u
poems
Was seiz'd by the spirit that trails in the lines underfo
The rim the sediment that stands for all the water
all the land of the globe

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Chaff straw splinters of wood weeds and the sea glut
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As I list to the dirge the voices of men and won
wreck'd
As I inhale the impalpable breezes that set in upon me
As the ocean so mysterious rolls toward me closer a
closer
I too but signify at the utmost a little wash'd up drift
A few sands and dead leaves to gather
Gather and merge myself as part of the sands and dr

O baffled balk'd bent to the very earth
Oppress'd with myself that I have dared to open
mouth
Aware now that amid all that blab whose echoes rec
upon me I have not once had the least id
who or what I am
But that before all my arrogant poems the real Me stil
yet untouch'd untold altogether unreach'd
Withdrawn far mocking me with mock-congratulato
signs and bows
With peals of distant ironical laughter at every word
have written
Pointing in silence to these songs and then to the sa
beneath

erick Goddard Tuckerman, 1821–1

TWO SONNETS

-ds

saw, too late, that there a body lay,
elt the wheels tilt but could not stop his horse
it not at once, then—flinging with a slap
he old cloth cover down he called a cap—
an back, ten steps or more, and nothing found . . .

es, the dead pines and deersfoot on the ground,—
so quick returned again in five or six
His cap was gone and in its stead thrown down
The very loon-skin the twice-drowned had on,
With bits of seaweed sticking to the flix.
So Long rode home, of cap and sense bereft,
But still can show the dead m

f Long's

But the old man here rose and reached the tongs,
laid fire to his pipe and phewed away

(See, the prismatic colors glistening and rolling),
Tufts of straw, sands, fragments,
Buoy'd hither from many moods, one contradicting
        other,
From the storm, the long calm, the darkness, the swe
Musing, pondering, a breath, a briny tear, a dab of l
        or soil,
Up just as much out of fathomless workings fr
        and thrown,
A limp blossom or two, torn, just as much over
        floating drifted at random,
Just as much for us that sobbing dirge of Nature,
Just as much whence we come that blare of the cl
        trumpets
We, capricious, brought hither we know not w
        spread out before you,
You up there walking or sitting
Whoever you are we too lie in drifts at your feet

THE LAST INVOCATION

At the last, tenderly,
From the walls of the powerful fortressed house
From the clasp of the knitted locks—from the keep of
        well closed doors,
Let me be wafted

Let me glide noiselessly forth
With the key of softness unlock the locks—with a whi
Set ope the doors O Soul!

Tenderly! be not impatient!
(Strong is your hold O mortal fle
Strong is your hold O love)

ederick Goddard Tuckerman, 1821–1873

TWO SONNETS

oung Silas Long a carrier through these woods,
rove home one night in not the best of moods,
Having just seen a drowned man flung ashore
With a strange feather cap And once before,
When he was hauling seine in Southold Bay

'ondering he drove when lo across the way
He saw too late that there a body lay
Felt the wheels jolt but could not stop his horse
Or not at once then—flinging with a slap
The old cloth cover down he called a cap—
Ran back ten steps or more and nothing found

Yes the dead pines and deersfoot on the ground —

With bits of seaweed sticking to the flax

And what what, what squealed like 'became of Longs?
But the old man here rose and reached the tongs
Laid fire to his pipe and phewed away

Emily Dickinson, 1830–1886

I TASTE A LIQUOR NEVER BREWED

I taste a liquor never brewed
From tankards scooped in pearl,
Not all the vats upon the Rhine
Yield such an alcohol!

Inebriate of air am I,
And debauchee of dew,
Reeling through endless summer days
From inns of molten blue

When landlords turn the drunken bee
Out of the foxglove's door,
When butterflies renounce their drams,
I shall but drink the more!

Till seraphs swing their snowy hats,
And saints to windows run,
To see the little tippler
Leaning against the sun!

I CANNOT LIVE WITH YOU

I cannot live with you,
It would be life,
And life is over there
Behind the shelf

The sexton keeps the key to,
Putting up
Our life, his porcelain,
Like a cup

Discarded of the housewife,
Quaint or broken
A newer Sevres pleases
Old ones crack

I could not die with you,
For one must wait
To shut the other's gaze down,—
You could not.

And I, could I stand by
And see you freeze,
Without my right of frost,
Death's privilege?

Nor could I rise with you,
Because your face
Would put out Jesus',
That new grace

Glow plain and foreign
On my homesick eye,
Except that you, than he
Shone closer by.

They'd judge us—how?
For you served Heaven, you know,
Or sought to;
I could not,

Because you saturated sight,
And I had no more eyes
For sordid excellence
As Paradise.

And were you lost, I would be,
Though my name
Rang loudest
On the heavenly fame.

And were you saved,
And I condemned to be
Where you were not,
That self were hell to me.

So we must keep apart,
You there, I here,
With just the door ajar
That oceans are,
And prayer,
And that pale sustenance,
Despair!

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Quaint or broken,
A newer Sèvres pleases,
Old ones crack.

Pounce on his bruises,
One, say, or three
Grief is a gourmand,
Spare his luxury

Best grief is tongueless—
Before he'll tell,
Burn him in the public square,
His embers will,

Possibly If they refuse
How then know,
Since a rack couldn't coax
A syllable now

THE LIGHTNING IS A YELLOW FORK

The lightning is a yellow fork
From tables in the sky
By inadvertent fingers dropped,
The awful cutlery

Of mansions never quite disclosed
And never quite concealed
The apparatus of the dark
To ignorance revealed

A WIFE AT DAYBREAK

A wife at daybreak I shall be
Sunrise hast thou a flag for me?
At midnight I am yet a maid—
How short it takes to make it bride!
Then Midnight I have passed from thee
Unto the East and Victory

Midnight "Good night!"
I hear them call
The Angels bustle in the hall
Softly my Future climbs [illegible]

REARRANGE A WIFE'S AFFECTIO

Rearrange a wife's affection?
When they dislocate my brain,
Amputate my freckled bosom,
Make me bearded like a man!

Blush, my spirit, in thy fastness,

Love that never leaped its socket,
Trust entrenched in narrow pain,
Constancy through fire awarded,
Anguish bare of anodyne,

Burden borne so far triumphant
None suspect me of the crown,
For I wear the thorns till sunset,
Then my diadem put on.

Big my secret but it's bandaged,
It will never get away
Till the day its weary keeper
Leads it through the grave to thee.

GRIEF IS A MOUSE

Grief is a mouse,
And chooses wainscot in the breast
For his shy house,
And baffles quest.

Grief is a thief,
Quick startled, pricks his ear
Report to hear of that vast dark
That swept his being back.

Grief is a juggler,
Boldest at the play,
Lest if he flinch,
The eye that way

One was a tattered monad called a poet
And with shrill voice ecstatic thus he sang
'Oh the little female monad's lips!
Oh, the little female monad's eyes
Ah, the little, little, female, female monad'

The last was a strong minded monadess,
Who dashed amid the infusoria,
Danced high and low, and wildly spun and dove
Till the dizzy others held their breath to see

But while they led their wondrous little lives
Aeonian moments had gone wheeling by
The burning drop had shrunk with fearful speed
A glistening film—'twas gone the leaf was dry
The little ghost of an inaudible squeak
Was lost to the frog that goggled from his stone-
h ge slow tread of a thoughtful ox
fatly plunged
til

Cned Maclean—"if the deer seek to cross to the burn,
thou turn them to me nor fail lest thy back be red as
thy hand

. hard fortuned Hamish, half blown of his breath with
the height of the hill,
as white in the face when the ten tined buck and the
does
frew leaping to burn ward huskily rose
. shouts, and his nether lip twitched and his legs were
o'er weak for his will

the deer darted lightly by Hamish and bounded away to
the burn
But Maclean never bating his watch tarried waiting below
Still Hamish hung heavy with fear for to go
l the space of an hour, then he went, and his face was
greenish and stern

nd his eye sat back in the socket and shrunken the eye-
balls shone,
As withdrawn from a vision of deeds it were shame to see
Now now grim henchman what is't with thee?
rake Maclean and his wrath rose red as a beacon the wind
hath upblown

Three does and a ten tined buck made out spoke Hamish,
full mild
And I ran for to turn but my breath it was blown and
they passed
I was weak for ye called ere I broke me my fast
ried Maclean Now a ten tined buck in the sight of the
wife and the child
had killed if the gluttonous kern had not wrought me a
nail's own wrong
Then he wounded and down came kinsmen and clansmen
all
Ten bl w for ten tine on his back let fall
And reckon n tr ke if the blood follow not at the bite of
thong,
So Hamish made bare and took him his strokes at the last
he smiled

den he turns; with a sea-hawk scream and a gibe, and a song,
"So I will spare ye the child if, in sight of ye all,
ows on Maclean's bare back shall fall,
reckon no stroke if the blood follow not at the bite of the thong!"

aclean he set hardly his tooth to his lip that his tooth was red,
hed short for a space, said "Nay, but it never shall be!
e hurl off the damnable hound in the sea!"
e wife "Can Hamish go fish us the child from the sea, if dead?

a!—Let them lash *me*, Hamish?"—"Nay!"—"Husband, the lashing will heal;
, oh, who will heal me the bonny sweet bairn in his grave?
ld ye cure me my heart with the death of a knave?
d! Love! I will bare thee—so—kneel." Then Maclean gan slowly to kneel

never a word till presently downward he jerked to the earth
nen the henchman—he that smote Hamish—would tremble and lag;
ke hard," quoth Hamish, full stern, from the crag;
n he struck him. "One!" sang Hamish, and danced with the child in his mirth

d no man spake beside Hamish; he counted each stroke with a song.
When the last stroke fell, then he moved him a pace down the height,
And he held forth the child in the heart-aching sight
f the mother, and looked all pitiful grave, as repenting a wrong

nd there as the motherly arms stretched out with the thanksgiving prayer—
And there as the mother crept up with a fearful swift pace,
Till her finger nigh felt of the bairnie's face—
n a flash fierce Hamish turned round and lifted the child

sudden he turns with a sea hawk scream, and a gibe, and a song,
nes 'So I will spare ye the child if, in sight of ye all,

[illegible]

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And he held forth the child in the heart aching sight
f the mother and looked all pitiful grave as repenting a wrong

nd there as the motherly arms stretched out with the thanksgiving prayer—

And sprang with the child in his arms from the height in the sea,
Shrill screeching, 'Revenge!' in the wind rush, and Maclean,
Age-feeble with anger and impotent pain,
Crawled up on the crag, and lay flat, and locked h[...] dead roots of a tree—
And gazed hungrily o'er, and the blood from his back dripped in the brine,
And a sea hawk flung down a skeleton fish as he flew
And the mother stared white on the waste of blue,
And the wind drove a cloud to seaward, and the sun be[...] to shine

William Vaughn Moody, 1869–1910

THE MENAGERIE

ank God my brain is not inclined to cut
ch capers every day! I'm just about
llow, but then—There goes the tent-flap shut.
in in the wind. I thought so: every snout
as twitching when the keeper turned me out.

hat screaming parrot makes my blood run cold.
abriel's trump! the big bull elephant
queals "Rain!" to the parched herd. The monkeys scold,
nd jabber that it's rain water they want.
It makes me sick to see a monkey pant.)

I'll foot it home, to try and make believe
m sober. After this I stick to beer,
nd drop the circus when the sane folks leave.
A man's a fool to look at things too near:
They look back, and begin to cut up queer.

Beasts do, at any rate; especially
Wild devils caged. They have the coolest way
Of being something else than what you see:
You pass a sleek young zebra nosing hay,
A nylghau looking bored and distingué,—

And think you've seen a donkey and a bird.
Not on your life! Just glance back, if you dare.
The zebra chews, the nylghau hasn't stirred;
But something's happened, Heaven knows what or where
To freeze your scalp and pompadour your hair.

I'm not precisely an æolian lute
Hung in the wandering winds of sentiment,
But drown me if the ugliest, meanest brute
Grunting and fretting in that sultry tent
Didn't just floor me with embarrassment!

'Twas like a thunder-clap from out the clear,—
One minute they were circus beasts, some grand,
Some ugly, some amusing, and some queer:

ughter? Why did all the daylight throb
soundless guffaw and dumb-stricken sob?

less I stood among those awful cages
beasts were walking loose, and I was bagged!
la t product of the toiling ages,
of heroic feet that never lagged —
tle man in trousers, slightly jagged

ver me from such another jury!
Judgment Day will be a picnic to t
ir satire was more dreadful than their fury,
l worst of all was just a kind of brute
gust, and giving up and sinking mute

ival of the fittest, adaptation
d all their other evolution terms
m to omit one small consideration
wit, that tumblebugs and angleworms
ve souls there's soul in everything that squirms

d souls are restless plagued impatient things
l dream and unaccountable desire
awling but pestered with the thought of wings;
reading through every inch of earth's old mire
ystical hanker after something higher

ishes are horses as I understand
guess a wistful polyp that has strokes
f feeling faint to gallivant on land
ill come to be a scandal to his folks
ere he will sprout in spite of threats and jokes

And at the core of every life that crawls
Or runs or flies or swims or vegetates—
Churning the mammoth's heavy blood in the galls
Of shark and tiger planting gorgeous hates
Lighting the love of eagles for their mates

Yes in the dim brain of the jellied fish
That is and is not living—moved and stirred
From the beginning a mysterious wish
A vision a command a fatal Word
The name of Man was uttered and they heard

Upward along the aeons of old war
They sought him wing and shank bone claw and bill
Were fashioned and rejected wide and far

Anonymous

FINNIGAN'S WAKE

Irish American Vaudeville Tune, c. 1870

n.gan lived in Walker Street
gentleman mighty odd,
beautiful brogue so rich and sweet,
rise in the world he carried the hod
u see, he d a sort of tippling way,
e love of the liquor poor Tim was born,
o help him on his work each day,
l a drop of the craythur every morn

With my philalloo, hubbaboo whack hurroo, boys,
D dn t we sing till our jaws did ache
And shout and laugh and drink and sing,
Oh its lots of fun at Finnigan s wake

morning Tim was rather full,
head felt heavy which made him shake,
ell from the ladder and broke his skull
hey carried him home himself to wake
ey tied him up in a nice clean sheet
d la d him out upon the bed
d a gallon of whiskey at his feet
a barrel of praties at his head

W th my ph lall o hubb aboo whack hurroo boys,
D dn t we sing till our jaws did ache
A d shout and laugh and drink and sing,
Oh ts l ts of fun at Finn gan s wake

friends assembled at the wake
s Finnigan call d out for the lunch
st t ey brought in tay and cake
hen p pes toba co and whiskey punch
Ida O Brine began to cry
uch a pretty corpse she never did see
r th Tim Mavourneen why d d you die?
 ld your gab said Paddy McGree

Edward Arlington Robinson, 1869–1935

EROS TURANNOS

She fears him, and will always ask
What fated her to choose him;
She meets in his engaging mask
All reasons to refuse him;
But what she meets and what she fears
Are less than are the downward years,
Drawn slowly to the foamless weirs
Of age, were she to lose him.

Between a blurred sagacity
That once had power to sound him,
And Love, that will not let him be
The Judas that she found him,
Her pride assuages her almost,
As if it were alone the cost.—
He sees that he will not be lost,
And waits and looks around him.

A sense of ocean and old trees
Envelops and allures him;
Tradition, touching all he sees,
Beguiles and reassures him;
And all her doubts of what he says
Are dimmed with what she knows of days—
Till even prejudice delays
And fades, and she secures him.

The falling leaf inaugurates
The reign of her confusion;
The pounding wave reverberates
The dirge of her illusion;
And home, where passion lived and died,
Becomes a place where she can hide,
While all the town and harbor side
Vibrate with her seclusion.

We tell you, tapping on our brows,
The story as it should be,—

Stephen Crane, 1871–1900

WAR IS KIND

ot weep maiden, for war is kind
use your lover threw wild hands toward the sky
the affrighted steed ran on alone
not weep
r is kind

Hoarse booming drums of the regiment,
Little souls who thirst for fight
These men were born to drill and die
The unexplained glory flies above them
Great is the battle-god great and his kingdom—
A field where a thousand corpses lie

o not weep babe for war is kind
ecause your father tumbled in the yellow trenches
aged at his breast gulped and died
Do not weep
War is kind

Swift blazing flag of the regiment
Eagle with crest of red and gold
These men were born to drill and die
Point for them the virtue of slaughter
Make plain to them the excellence of killing
And a field where a thousand corpses lie

Mother whose heart hung humble as a button
On the bright splendid shroud of your son
Do not weep
War is kind

Stephen Crane, 1871–1900

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Gertrude Stein, 1874–1946

STANZAS IN MEDITATION VI (194

Why am I if I am uncertain reasons may inclose
Remain remain propose repose chose
I call carelessly that the door is open
Which if they can refuse to open
No one can rush to close
Let them be mine therefor
Everybody knows that I chose
Therefor if therefor before I close
I will therefor offer therefor I offer this
Which if I refuse to miss can be miss is mine
I will be well welcome when I come
Because I am coming
Certainly I come having come

These stanzas are done

Robert Frost, 1875–

AFTER APPLE PICKING

My long two-pointed ladder's sticking through a tree
Toward heaven still
And there's the barrel that I didn't fill
Beside it, and there may be two or three
Apples I didn't pick upon some bough
But I am done with apple-picking now
Essence of winter sleep is on the night
The scent of apples I am drowsing off
I cannot rub the strangeness from my sight
I got from looking through a pane of glass
I skimmed this morning from the drinking trough
And held against the world of hoary grass
It melted and I let it fall and break
But I was well
Upon my way to sleep before it fell
And I could tell
What form my dreaming was about to take
Magnified apples appear and disappear
Stem end and blossom end
And every fleck of russet showing clear
My instep arch not only keeps the ache
It keeps the pressure of a ladder round
I feel the ladder sway as the boughs bend
And I keep hearing from the cellar bin
The rumbling sound
Of load on load of apples coming in
For I have had too much
Of apple picking I am overtired
Of the great harvest I myself desired
There were ten thousand thousand fruit to touch,
Cherish in hand lift down and not let fall
For all
That struck the earth
No matter if not bruised or spiked with stubble,
Went surely to the cider apple heap
As of no worth
One can see what will trouble
This sleep of mine whatever sleep it is.

Were he not gone,
The woodchuck could say whether it's like his
Long sleep, as I describe its coming on,
Or just some human sleep.

THE BLACK COTTAGE

That had gone out of it, the father first,
Then the two sons, till she was left alone.
(Nothing could draw her after those two sons.
She valued the considerate neglect
She had at some cost taught them after years.)
I mean by the world's having passed it by—
As we almost got by this afternoon.
It always seems to me a sort of mark
To measure how far fifty years have brought us.
Why not sit down if you are in no haste?
These doorsteps seldom have a visitor.
The warping boards pull out their own old nails
With none to tread and put them in their place.
She had her own idea of things, the old lady.
And she liked to talk. She had seen Garrison
And Whittier, and had her story of them.
One wasn't long in learning that she thought
Whatever else the Civil War was for,
It wasn't just to keep the States together,
Nor just to free the slaves, though it did both.
She wouldn't have believed those ends enough
To have given outright for them all she gave.
Her giving somehow touched the principle
That all men are created free and equal.
And to hear her quaint phrases—so removed
From the world's view to-day of all those things.
That's a hard mystery of Jefferson's.
What did he mean? Of course the easy way
Is to decide it simply isn't true.
It may not be. I heard a fellow say so.
But never mind, the Welshman got it planted
Where it will trouble us a thousand years.
Each age will have to reconsider it.

TO EARTHWARD

Love at the lips was touch
As sweet as I could bear;
And once that seemed too much,
I lived on air

That crossed me from sweet things,
The flow of—was it musk
From hidden grapevine springs
Down hill at dusk?

I had the swirl and ache
From sprays of honeysuckle
That when they're gathered shake
Dew on the knuckle

I craved strong sweets but those
Seemed strong when I was young,
The petal of the rose
It was that stung

Now no joy but lacks salt
That is not dashed with pain
And weariness and fault
I crave the stain

Of tears the aftermark
Of almost too much love,
The sweet of bitter bark
And burning clove

When stiff and sore and scarred
I take away my hand
From leaning on it hard
In grass and sand

The hurt is not enough
I long for weight and strength
To feel the earth as rough
To all my length

Anonymous

COCAINE LIL

Chicago-Detroit, late Nineteenth Century

Did you ever hear about Cocaine Lil?
She lived in Cocaine town on Cocaine hill,
She had a cocaine dog and a cocaine cat,
They fought all night with the cocaine rat

She had cocaine hair on her cocaine head
She wore a snow bird hat and sleigh-riding clothes.
She had a cocaine dress that was poppy red
On her coat she wore a crimson, cocaine rose.

Big gold chariots on the Milky Way,
Snakes and elephants silver and gray
O the cocaine blues they make me sad,
O the cocaine blues make me feel bad

Lil went to a "snow" party one cold night,
And the way she "sniffed" was sure a fright
There was Hophead Mag with Dopey Slim,
Kankakee Liz with Yen Shee Jim

There was Hasheesh Nell and the Poppy Face Kid,
Climbed up snow ladders and down they slid,
There was Stepladder Kit he stood six feet
And the Sleighriding Sisters that are hard to beat.

Along in the morning about half past three
They were all lit up like a Christmas tree
Lil got home and started to go to bed,
Took another "sniff" and it knocked her dead

They laid her out in her cocaine clothes
She wore a snow bird hat and a crimson rose,
On her headstone you'll find this refrain
"She died as she lived, sniffing cocaine"

DEPARTMENTAL

An ant on the table cloth
Ran into a dormant moth
Of many times his size
He showed not the least surprise
His business wasn't with such
He gave it scarcely a touch
And was off on his duty run
Yet if he encountered one
Of the hive's enquiry squad
Whose work is to find out God
And the nature of time and space
He would put him onto the case
Ants are a curious race
One crossing with hurried tread
The body of one of their dead
Isn't given a moment's arrest
Seems not even impressed
But he no doubt reports to any
With whom he crosses antennae
And they no doubt report
To the higher up at court
Then word goes forth in Formic
Death's come to Jerry McCormic
Our selfless forager
Will the special Jan
Whose office it is
The dead of the
Go bring him h
Lay him in state
Wrap him for sh
Embalm him wit
This is the word
And presently
Appears a solemn
And taking for
With feelers cal
Seizes the dead
And heaving him
Carries him out
No one stands rou
It is nobody else's

It couldn't be called un
But how thoroughly d

Anonymous

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She had cocaine hair on her cocaine head
She wore a snow bird hat and sleigh riding clothes.
She h[illegible]d a cocaine dress that was poppy red
On her coat she wore a crimson cocaine rose

B[illegible]g gold chariots on the Milky Way
Sn[illegible]kes and elephants silver and gray
O the coca[illegible]ne blues they make me sad
O the cocaine blues make me feel bad.

Lil went to a "snow" party one cold night,
And the way she "sniffed" was sure a fright
There was Hophead Mag with Dopey Slim,
Kankakee Liz with Yen Shee Jim.

There [illegible] Hasheesh Nell and the Poppy Face Kid,
Climbed up sn[illegible]w ladders and down they sl[illegible]d
There [illegible] Stepladder Kit he s[illegible]ood six feet.
And the Sleighriding Sisters that are hard to beat.

[illegible]ng in the mo[illegible]ning about half past th[illegible]ee
They were all lit up like a Christmas tree
[illegible] and started [illegible] to bed
[illegible] and it kn[illegible]cked her dead

[illegible] her out in her cocaine clothes
[illegible] hat and a crim[illegible]
[illegible] you'll find this refrain
[illegible] she [illegible] sniffing cocaine."

...sun rises and the sun sets in her eyes
...er her steady and her heart went pit a pat
...ook away the money for a prize waltz at a Brotherhood
dance
...had eyes she was safe as the bridge over the Mississippi
at Burlington I married her

...summer we took the cushions going west.
...'s Peak is a big old stone believe me
...ened down something you can count on
...going to come out all night—do you know?
...sun the birds, the grass—they know
...get along—and we'll get along

SINGING NIGGER

...ur bony head Jazbo O dock walloper
...your grappling hooks those wheelbarrow handlers
...he dome and the wings of you nigger
...he red roof and the door of you
...where your songs came from
...now why God listens to your "Walk All Over God's
Heaven"
...heard you shooting craps "My baby's going to have a new
dress"
...eard you in the cinders "I'm going to live anyhow until
I die"
...ny five of you with a can of beer on a summer night and
I listen to the five of you harmonizing six ways
to sing "Way Down Yonder in the Cornfield"
...a way a king where I come from

Eagle countenance in sharp relief,
Beard a-flying, air of high command
Unabated in that holy land.

(*Sweet flute music.*)
Jesus came from out the court-house door,
Stretched his hands above the passing poor.
Booth saw not, but led his queer ones there
Round and round the mighty court-house square.
Then in an instant all that blear review
Marched on spotless, clad in raiment new.
The lame were straightened, withered limbs uncurled
And blind eyes opened on a new, sweet world.

(*Bass drum louder.*)
Drabs and vixens in a flash made whole!
Gone was the weasel-head, the snout, the jowl!
Sages and sibyls now, and athletes clean,
Rulers of empires, and of forests green!

(*Grand chorus of all instruments. Tambourines to the foreground.*)
The hosts were sandalled, and their wings were fire!
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)
But their noise played havoc with the angel-choir.
(Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)
Oh, shout Salvation! It was good to see
Kings and Princes by the Lamb set free.
The banjos rattled and the tambourines
Jing-jing-jingled in the hands of Queens.

(*Reverently sung, no instruments.*)
And when Booth halted by the curb for prayer
He saw his Master thro' the flag-filled air.
Christ came gently with a robe and crown
For Booth the soldier, while the throng knelt down.
He saw King Jesus. They were face to face,
And he knelt a-weeping in that holy place.
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Eagle countenance in sharp relief,
Beard a-flying, air of high command
Unabated in that holy land.

(*Sweet flute music.*)

[illegible]

(*Bass drum louder.*)

[illegible]

jowl!

(*Grand chorus of all instruments. Tambourines to the foreground.*)

The hosts were sandalled, and their wings were fire!

[illegible]

choir.

Kings and Princes by the Lamb set free.
The banjos rattled and the tambourines
Jing-jing-jingled in the hands of Queens.

(*Reverently sung, no instruments.*)

[illegible] for prayer

[illegible] down

And he knelt a-weeping in that holy place.
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

They were charged with vag, for they had no kale,
And the judge said, "Sixty days in jail"
But the john had a bindle—a workers' plea—
So they gave him a floater and set him free

They had turned him out but ditched his mate,
So he glommed the guts of an east bound freight
He had held his form to a rusty rod
Till he heard the shack say "Hit the sod!"

The john rolled off, he was in the ditch
With two switch lamps and a rusty switch—
A poor old seedy half-starved 'bo
On a hostile pike without a show

From away off somewhere in the dark
Came the sharp short notes of a coyote's bark
That 'bo looked round and quickly rose
And shook the dust from his threadbare clothes

Far off in the west in the moonlit night
He saw the gleam of a big head light—
An east bound stock run hummed the rail
It was due at the switch to clear the mail

As it pulled up close the head-end shack
Threw the switch to the passing track
The stock rolled in and off the main
The line was clear for the west bound train

As she hove in sight far up the track
She was working steam with her brake-shoes slack
She whistled once at the whistling post
Then she flittered by like a frightened ghost

He could hear the roar of the big six wheel
As the drivers pounded the polished steel
And the screech of the flanges on the rail
As she beat it west up the desert trail

The john got busy and took the risk
He climbed aboard and began to frisk
He reached up high and began to feel
For the end-door pin—then he cracked the seal

'Twas a double-decker loaded with sheep
Old john crawled in and went to sleep
The con high balled and she whistled out—
On the Gila Monster Route

Wallace Stevens, 1879–

THIRTEEN WAYS OF LOOKING AT A BLACKBIRD

I

Among twenty snowy mountains
The only moving thing
Was the eye of the blackbird

II

I was of three minds
Like a tree
In which there are three blackbirds

III

The blackbird whirled in the autumn winds
It was a small part of the pantomime

IV

A man and a woman
Are one
A man and a woman and a blackbird
Are one

V

I do not know which to prefer
The beauty of inflections
Or the beauty of innuendoes
The blackbird whistling
Or just after

VI

Icicles filled the long window
With barbaric glass
The shadow of the blackbird
Crossed it to and fro
The mood
Traced in the shadow
An indecipherable cause

VII

O thin men of Haddam
Why do you imagine golden birds?
Do you not see how the blackbird
Walks around the feet
Of the women about you?

VIII

I know noble accents
And lucid inescapable rhythms
But I know too
That the blackbird is involved
In what I know

IX

When the blackbird flew out of sight,
It marked the edge
Of one of many circles

X

At the sight of blackbirds
Flying in a green light
Even the bawds of euphony
Would cry out sharply

XI

He rode over Connecticut
In a glass coach
Once a fear pierced him
In that he mistook
The shadow of his equipage
For blackbirds.

XII

The river is moving
The blackbird must be flying

XIII

It was evening all afternoon
It was snowing
And it was going to snow
The blackbird sat
In the cedar limbs

IT MUST BE ABSTRACT

I am the spouse She took her necklace off
And laid it in the sand As I am, I am
The spouse She opened her stone-studded bel

I am the spouse divested of bright gold,
The spouse beyond emerald or amethyst,
Beyond the burning body that I bear

I am the woman stripped more nakedly
Than nakedness standing before an inflexible
Order, saying I am the contemplated spouse

Speak to me that which spoken will array m
In its own only precious ornament
Set on me the spirit's diamond coronal

Clothe me entire in the final filament,
So that I tremble with such love so known
And myself am precious for your perfecting

William Carlos Williams, 1883–

HOW STRANGE YOU ARE -

From Paterson

How strange you are you idiot!
So you think because the rose
Is red that you shall have the mastery?
The rose is green and will bloom
overtopping you green livid
green when you shall no more speak or
taste or even be My whole life
has hung too long upon a partial victory

But creature of the weather I
dont want to go any faster than
I have to go to win
Music it for yourself

He picked a hairpin from the floor
and stuck it in his ear probing
around inside—

The melting snow
dripped from the cornice by his window
9 strokes a minute—

He descried
in the linoleum at his feet a womans
face smelled his hands

strong of a lotion he had used
not long since lavender
rolled his thumb

about the tip of his left index finger
and watched it dip each time
like the head

of a cat licking its paw heard the
faint filing sound it made of
earth his ears are full there is no sound

And his thoughts soared
to the magnificence of imagined delights
where he would probe

as into the pupil of an eye
as through a hoople of fire, and emerge
sheathed in a robe
streaming with light. What heroic
dawn of desire
is denied to his thoughts?
They are trees
from whose leaves streaming with rain
his mind drinks of desire

TRACT

I will teach you my townspeople
how to perform a funeral—
for you have it over a troop
of artists—
unless one should scour the world—
you have the ground sense necessary.

See! the hearse leads.
I begin with a design for a hearse.
For Christ's sake not black—
nor white either—and not polished!
Let it be weathered—like a farm wagon—
with gilt wheels (this could be
applied fresh with small expense)
or no wheels at all:
a rough dray to drag over the ground.

Knock the glass out!
My God—glass, my townspeople!
For what purpose? Is it for the dead
to look out or for us to see
how well he *is housed or to see*
the flowers or the lack of them—
or what?

To keep the rain and snow from him?
He will have a heavier rain soon:
pebbles and dirt and what not.
Let there be no glass—
and *no upholstery!* phew!
and no little brass rollers
and small easy wheels on the bottom—
my townspeople what are you thinking of?

A rough plain hearse then
with gilt wheels and no top at all
On this the coffin lies
by its own weight

No wreaths please—
especially no hot house flowers!
Some common memento is better
something he prized and is known by
his old clothes—a few books perhaps—
God knows what! You realize
how we are about these things,
my townspeople—
something will be found—anything—
even flowers if he had come to that.
So much for the hearse

For heaven s sake though see to the driver!
Take off the silk hat! In fact
that s no place at all for him
up there unceremoniously
dragging our friend out to his own dignity!
Bring him down—bring him down!
Low and inconspicuous! I d not have him ride
on the wagon at all—damn him—
the undertaker s understrapper!
Let him hold the reins
and walk at the side
and inconspicuously too

Then briefly as to yourselves
Walk behind—as they do in France
seventh class or if you ride
Hell take curtains Go with some show
of inconvenience sit openly—
to the weather as to grief
Or do you think you can shut grief in?
What—from us? We who have perhaps
nothing to lose? Share with us
share with us—it will be money
in your pockets

Go now
I think you are ready

His feet were used to treading a gale
  And balancing thereon,
His face was brown as a foreign sail
  Threadbare against the sun

His arms were thick as hickory logs
  Whittled to little wrists
Strong as the teeth of terrier dogs
  Were the fingers of his fists

Within his arms I feared to sink
  Where lions shook their manes,
And dragons drawn in azure ink
  Leapt quickened by his veins

Dreadful his strength and length of limb
  As the sea to foundering ships,
I dipped my hands in love for him
  No deeper than their tips

But our palms were welded by a flame
  The moment we came to part
And on his knuckles I read my name
  Enscrolled within a heart

And something made our wills to bend
  As wild as trees blown over
We were no longer friend and friend,
  But only lover and lover

"In seven weeks or seventy years—
  God grant it may be sooner!—
I'll make a handkerchief for your tears
  From the sails of my captain's schooner

"We'll wear our loves like wedding rings
  Long polished to our touch
We shall be busy with other things
  And they cannot bother us much

When you are skimming the wrinkled cream
  And your ring clinks on the pan
You'll say to yourself in a pensive dream,
  How wonderful a man

When I am slitting a fish's head
  And my ring clanks on the knife
I'll say with thanks, as a prayer is said
  How beautiful a wife!

"And I shall fold my decorous paws
In velvet smooth and deep,
Like a kitten that covers up its claws
To sleep and sleep and sleep

"Like a little blue pigeon you shall bow
Your bright alarming crest,
In the crook of my arm you'll lay your bro
To rest and rest and rest"

Will he never come back from Barnegat
With thunder in his eyes,
Treading as soft as a tiger cat,
To tell me terrible lies?

Ezra Pound, 1885–

LYRICS

From Hugh Selwyn Mauberley

E. P. ODE POUR L'ELECTION DE SON SEPULCHRE

For three years out of key with his time,
He strove to resuscitate the dead art
Of poetry to maintain 'the sublime'
In the old sense Wrong from the start—

No hardly but seeing he had been born
In a half-savage country out of date
Bent resolutely on wringing lilies from the acorn,
Capaneus, trout for factitious bait

'Ιδμεν γάρ τοι πάνθ' ὅσ' ἐνὶ Τροίῃ
Caught in the unstopped ear
Giving the rocks small lee way
The chopped seas held him therefore that year

His true Penelope was Flaubert
He fished by obstinate isles
Observed the elegance of Circe's hair
Rather than the mottoes on sun-dials

Unaffected by the march of events,
He passed from men's memory in *l'an trentiesme*
De son eage the case presents
No adjunct to the Muses diadem

II

The age demanded an image
Of its accelerated grimace
Something for the modern stage
Not at any rate an Attic grace

Not not certainly the obscure reveries
Of the inward gaze
Better mendacities
Than the classics in paraphrase!

The age demanded chiefly a mould in plaster,
Made with no loss of time
A prose kinema not not assuredly alabaster
Or the sculpture of rhyme

III

The tea rose tea gown etc
Supplants the mousseline of Cos
The pianola replaces
Sappho's barbitos

Christ follows Dionysus
Phallic and ambrosial
Made way for macerations
Caliban casts out Ariel

All things are a flowing
Sage Heracleitus says
But a tawdry cheapness
Shall outlast *our days*

Even the Christian beauty
Defects—after Samothrace
We see τὸ καλὸν
Decreed in the market place

Faun's flesh is not to us
Nor the saint's vision
We have the press for wafer
Franchise for circumcision

All men in law are equals
Free of Pisistratus
We choose a knave or an eunuch
To rule over us

O bright Apollo
τίν ἄνδρα, τίν ἥρωα, τίνα θεόν
What god man or hero
Shall I place a tin wreath upon!

IV

These fought in any case
and some believing
pro domo in any case

Some quick to arm,
some for adventure,
some from fear of weakness,
some from fear of censure,
some for love of slaughter, in imagination,
learning later . .
some in fear, learning love of slaughter;

Died some, pro patria,
non "dulce" non "et decor" .
walked eye-deep in hell
believing in old men's lies, then unbelieving
came home, home to a lie,
home to many deceits,
home to old lies and new infamy;
usury age-old and age-thick
and liars in public places.

Daring as never before, wastage as never before.
Young blood and high blood,
fair cheeks, and fine bodies;
fortitude as never before

frankness as never before,
disillusions as never told in the old days,
hysterias, trench confessions,
laughter out of dead bellies.

V

There died a myriad,
And of the best, among them,
For an old bitch gone in the teeth,
For a botched civilization,

Charm, smiling at the good mouth,
Quick eyes gone under earth's lid,

For two gross of broken statues,
For a few thousand battered books.

☆ ☆ ☆

Envoi (1919)

Go, dumb-born book,
Tell her that sang me once that song of Lawes:
Hadst thou but song
As thou hast subjects known,

Then were there cause in thee that should
Even my faults that heavy upon me lie,
And build her glories their longevity

Tell her that sheds
Such treasure in the air
Recking naught else but that her graces give
Life to the moment
I would bid them live
As roses might in magic amber laid
Red overwrought with orange and all made
One substance and one colour
Braving time

Tell her that goes
With song upon her lips
But sings not out the song nor knows
The maker of it some other mouth
May be as fair as hers
Might in new ages gain her worshippers
When our two dusts with Waller's shall be laid
Siftings on siftings in oblivion
Till change hath broken down
All things save Beauty alone

CANTO XLV

With Usura

With usura hath no man a house of good stone
each block cut smooth and well fitting
that design might cover their face,
with usura
hath no man a painted paradise on his church wall
harpes et luthes
or where virgin receiveth message
and halo projects from incision
with usura
seeth r
no p

ubines

..h usura the line grows thick
w.h usura is no clear demarcation
and no man can find site for his dwelling
S.ne cutter is kept from his stone
..er is kept from his loom
..TH USURA
..ol comes not to market
..eep bringeth no gain with usura
..ra is a murrain, usura
..nteth the needle in the maid's hand
..d stoppeth the spinner's cunning. Pietro Lombardo
..m not by usura
..ccio came not by usura
.. Pier della Francesca, Zuan Bellin' not by usura
.. was 'La Calunnia' painted
..ame not by usura Angelico; came not Ambrogio Praedis,
..ame no church of cut stone signed: *Adamo me fecit.*
..ot by usura St. Trophime
..ot by usura Saint Hilaire
..sura rusteth the chisel
..rusteth the craft and the craftsman
..gnaweth the thread in the loom
..one learneth to weave gold in her pattern;
..zure hath a canker by usura; cramoisi is unbroidered
..merald findeth no Memling
..sura slayeth the child in the womb
..t stayeth the young man's courting
..t hath brought palsey to bed, lyeth
..etween the young bride and her bridegroom
CONTRA NATURAM
They have brought whores for Eleusis
..rpses are set to banquet
..t behest of usura

Then were there cause in thee that should con
Even my faults that heavy upon me lie,
And build her glories their longevity

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Such treasure in the air
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and halo projects from incision
with usura
seeth no man Gonzaga his heirs and his concubine
no picture is made to endure nor to live with
but it is made to sell and sell quickly
with usura sin against nature
is thy bread ever more of stale rags
is thy bread dry as paper
with no mountain wheat no strong flour

Marianne Moore, 1887–

THE FISH

wade
through black jade
Of the crow blue mussel-shells one
keeps
adjusting the ash heaps
opening and shutting itself like

red fan
he barnacles which encrust the side
of the wave cannot hide
there for the submerged shafts of
the

un
split like spun
glass move themselves with spotlight
swiftness
into the crevices—
in and out illuminating

the
turquoise sea
of bodies The water drives a wedge
of iron through the iron edge
f the cliff whereupon the stars

pink
rice gr ns ink
be pattered jelly fish crabs like green
lili and sub marine
t adst l lide each on the other

All
extern il
marks of abuse are present on this
defiant edifice—
all the physical features of

Marianne Moore, 1887–

THE FISH

wade
through black jade
  Of the crow blue mussel-shells, one
      keeps
    adjusting the ash heaps
      opening and shutting itself like

an
injured fan
  The barnacles which encrust the side
      of the wave cannot hide
    there for the submerged shafts of
      the

sun
split like spun
  glass, move themselves with spotlight
      swiftness
    into the crevices—
      in and out illuminating

the
turquoise sea
  of bodies The water drives a wedge
  of iron through the iron edge
      of the cliff whereupon the stars

pink
rice grains ink
  bespattered jelly fish crabs like green
  lilies and submarine
      toadstools slide each on the other

All
external
  marks of abuse are present on this
  defiant edifice—
    all the physical features of

It tears off the veil, tears
the temptation, the
mist the heart wears,
from its eyes,—if the heart
has a face; it takes apart
dejection. It's fire in the dove-neck's

iridescence, in the
inconsistencies
of Scarlatti.
Unconfusion submits
its confusion to proof; it's
not a Herod's oath that cannot change.

ural to man and no other animal, cruelty and filth and superstition, grained in man's making

III

ge darkens Europe mixes her cups of death, all the little Caesars fidget on their thrones,

old wound opens its clotted mouth to ask for new wounds Men will fight through men have tough hearts

will fight through to the autumn flowering and ordered prosperity They will lift their heads in the great times

e empire and say "Freedom? Freedom was a fire We are well quit of freedom, we have found prosperity

will say "Where now are the evil prophets?" Thus for a time in the age's afterglow the sterile time

the wounds drain the freedom has died slowly the machines break down slowly the wilderness returns

IV

distant future children going down to the foot of the mountain the new barbarism the night of time

rn your own dead if you remember them but not for civilization not for our scuttled futilities

are saved from being little entrails feeding large brains you are saved from being little empty bundles of enjoyment

are not to be fractional supported people but complete men you will guard your own heads you will have proud eyes

u will stand among the spears when you meet life will be lovely and terrible again great and in earnest

u will know hardship hunger and violence these are not the evils what power can save you from the real evils

barbarism? What poet will be born to tell you to hate

hen th

Robinson Jeffers, 1887–

HELLENISTICS

I look at the Greek-derived design that nourished my
fancy—this Wedgwood copy of the Portland va
Someone had given it to my father—my eyes at five ye
old used to devour it by the hour

I look at a Greek coin, four-drachma piece struck by L
machus, young Alexander's head
With the horns of Ammon and brave brow-ridges, the bay
pride and immortal youth and wild sensitivene

I think of Achilles, Sappho, the Nike. I think of those m
centuries who marched in the heart of Asia
And lived to salute the sea: the lean faces like lance-hea
the grace of panthers. The dull welter of Asia

I am past childhood, I look at this ocean and the fish
birds, the streaming skerries, the shining water
The foam-heads, the exultant dawn-light going west,
pelicans, their huge wings half folded, plungi
like stones

Whatever it is catches my heart in its hands, whatever it
makes me shudder with love
And painful joy and the tears prickle . . . the Greeks we
not inventors. The Greeks were not the invent

Of shining clarity and jewel-sharp form and the beauty
God. He was free with men before the Gree
came
He is here naked on the shining water. Every eye that h
a man's nerves behind it has known him.

II

I think of the dull welter of Asia. I think of squalid swarm
along the Congo, the natural
Condition of man, that makes one say of all beasts "The
are not contemptible. Man is contemptible." I se

The squalor of our own frost-bitten forefathers. I will pra
the Greeks for having pared down the shame o
three vices

Demands what victim? The dykes of red lava and black
what Titan? The hills like pointed flames
ond Soberanes the terrible peaks of the bare hills,
under the sun what immolation?)
is coast crying out for tragedy like all beautiful places
and like the passionate spirit of humanity
in for its bread Gods, many victims the painful
deaths, the horrible transfigurements I said in
my heart
etter invent than suffer imagine victims
st your own flesh be chosen the agonist or you
atyr some creature to the beauty of the place And I
said
ism sacrifices once a year to magic
orror away from the house this little house here
ou have built over the ocean with your own hands
ende the standing boulders for what are we
he beast that walks upright with speaking lips
nd little hair to think we should always be fed
heltered intact, and self-controlled We sooner more
liable
han the other animals Pain and terror the insanities of
desire not accidents but essential
nd crowd up from the core I imagined victims for
those wolves I made them phantoms to follow
They have hunted the phantoms and missed the house
It is not good to forget over what gulfs the spirit
Of the beauty of humanity the petal of a lost flower
blown seaward by the night wind floats to its
quietness

III

Boulders blunted like an old bear's teeth break up from
the headland below them
All the soil is thick with shells the tide-rock feasts of a
dead people
Here the granite flanks are scarred with ancient fire, the
ghosts of the tribe
Crouch in the nights beside the ghost of a fire they try
t remember the sunlight
Light has died out of their skies These have paid some-
thing for the future
Luck of the country while we living keep old griefs in
memory though Gods

John Crowe Ransom, 1888–

PHILOMELA

ne, Philomela, and Itylus,
names are liquid your improbable tale
nted in the classic numbers of the nightingale
but our numbers are not felicitous,
es not liquidly for us

bed on a Roman dex and duly apostrophized,
nightingale descanted unto Ovid
has even appeared to the Teutons, the swilled and
gravid
Fontainebleau it may be the bird was gallicized,
er was she baptized

England came Philomela with her pain,
ing the hawk her husband querulous ghost
wanders when he sits heavy on his roost,
ers herself in the original again
e untranslatable refrain

t to these shores she came' this other Thrace,
tron barbarous to the royal Attic
m could her delicate dirge run democratic
livered in a cloudless boundless public place
an inordinate race?

ernoctated with the Oxford students once
d in the quadrangles in the cloisters on the Cher,
eciously knocked at antique doors ajar
tuously touched the hems of the hierophants,
ck of my dissonance

went out to Bagley Wood I climbed the hill
hen the moon had slanted off in a twinkling
heard the sepulchral owl and a few bells tinkling,
here was no more villainous day to unfulfil
he diurn s was still

Envy is not a likely fountain of ruin, to forget evils c
down
Sudden reminders from the cloud remembered deaths
our redeemers,
Imagined victims our salvation white as the half m
at midnight
Someone flamelike passed me, saying, 'I am Tamar Ca
well, I have my desire,'
Then the voice of the sea returned, when she had g
by the stars to their towers
Beautiful country burn again, Point Pinos down to
Sur Rivers
Burn as before with bitter wonders, land and ocean a
the Carmel water

IV

He brays humanity in a mortar to bring the savor
From the bruised root a man having bad dreams, w
invents victims is only the ape of that God
He washes it out with tears and many waters, calcines
with fire in the red crucible,
Deforms it, makes it horrible to itself the spirit flies
and stands naked, he sees the spirit,
He takes it in the naked ecstasy it breaks in his ha
the atom is broken, the power that massed it
Cries to the power that moves the stars, "I have co
home to myself behold me
I bruised myself in the flint mortar and burnt me
In the red shell I tortured myself, I flew forth,
Stood naked of myself and broke me in fragments,
And here am I moving the stars that are me'
I have seen these ways of God I know of no reason
For fire and change and torture and the old returnin
He being sufficient might be still I think they admit n
reason, they are the ways of my love
Unmeasured power, incredible passion enormous craft
no thought apparent but burns darkly
Smothered with its own smoke in the human brain-vault
no thought outside a certain measure in phe-
nomena
The fountains of the boiling stars the flowers on the for
land, the ever returning roses of dawn

John Crowe Ransom, 1888–

PHILOMELA

rone Philomela, and Itylus,
ur names are liquid your improbable tale
rected in the classic numbers of the nightingale
, but our numbers are not felicitous
ges not liquidly for us

rched on a Roman ilex and duly apostrophized
e nightingale descanted unto Ovid
e has even appeared to the Teutons the swilled and
grand
Fontainebleau it may be the bird was gallicized,
ever was she baptized

England came Philomela with her pain
eing the hawk her husband querulous ghost
e wanders when he sits heavy on his roost,
ters herself in the original again
he untranslatable refrain

let to these shores she came this other Thrace,
ation barbarous to the royal Attic
ow could her delicate dirge run democratic
elivered in a cloudless boundless public place
o an inordinate race?

pernoctated with the Oxford students once
nd in the quadrangles in the cloisters on the Cher,
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atuously touched the hems of the hierophants,
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T S Eliot, 1888–

THE BOSTON EVENING TRANSCRIPT

aders of the Boston *Evening Transcript*
n the wind like a field of ripe corn

ı evening quickens faintly in the street,
ming the appetites of life in some
to others bringing the Boston *Evening Transcript*
unt the steps and ring the bell turning
anly as one would turn to nod good bye to Rochefou
cauld
the street were time and he at the end of the street
nd I say "Cousin Harriet here is the Boston *Evening
Transcript*

THE LOVE SONG OF J ALFRED PRUFROCK

S io credesse che mia risposta fosse
A persona che mai tornasse al mondo,
Questa fiamma staria senza piu scosse
Ma perciocche giammai di questo fondo
Non torno vivo alcun s i odo il vero,
Senza tema d infamia ti rispondo

t us go then you and I
hen the evening is spread out against the sky
ike a patient etherised upon a table
et us go through certain half-deserted streets,
he muttering retreats
Of restless nights in one night cheap hotels
And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells
Streets that follow like a tedious argument
Of insidious intent
To lead you to an overwhelming question
Oh do not ask "What is it?"
… and make our visit.

Know the voices dying with a dying fall
Beneath the music from a farther room
So how should I presume?

And I have known the eyes already, known them all—
The eyes that fix you in a formulated phrase
And when I am formulated, sprawling on a pin
When I am pinned and wriggling on the wall
Then how should I begin
To spit out all the butt-ends of my days and ways?
And how should I presume?

And I have known the arms already known them all—
Arms that are braceleted and white and bare
(But in the lamplight, downed with light brown hair!)
Is it perfume from a dress
That makes me so digress?
Arms that lie along a table or wrap about a shawl
And should I then presume?
And how should I begin?



Shall I say I have gone at dusk through narrow streets
And watched the smoke that rises from the pipes
Of lonely men in shirt-sleeves leaning out of windows?

I should have been a pair of ragged claws
Scuttling across the floors of silent seas



And the afternoon the evening sleeps so peacefully!
Smoothed by long fingers,
Asleep tired or it malingers
Stretched on the floor here beside you and me
Should I after tea and cakes and ices
Have the strength to force the moment to its crisis?
But though I have wept and fasted wept and prayed
Though I have seen my head (grown slightly bald) brought in upon a platter
I am no prophet—and here's no great matter
I have seen the moment of my greatness flicker
And I have seen the eternal Footman hold my coat and snicker
And in short I was afraid

Shall I part my hair behind? Do I dare to eat a peach?
I shall wear white flannel trousers, and walk upon the
beach.
I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each

I do not think that they will sing to me

I have seen them riding seaward on the waves
Combing the white hair of the waves blown back
When the wind blows the water white and black.

We have lingered in the chambers of the sea
By sea-girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown
Till human voices wake us, and we drown.

DIFFICULTIES OF A STATESMAN

CRY what shall I cry?
All flesh is grass: comprehending
The Companions of the Bath, the Knights of the British
Empire, the Cavaliers,
O Cavaliers, of the Legion of Honour,
The Order of the Black Eagle (1st and 2nd class),
And the Order of the Rising Sun.
Cry cry what shall I cry?
The first thing to do is to form the committees:
The consultative councils, the standing committees, select
committees and sub-committees.
One secretary will do for several committees.
What shall I cry?
Arthur Edward Cyril Parker is appointed telephone
operator
At a salary of one pound ten a week rising by annual
increments of five shillings
To two pounds ten a week; with a bonus of thirty shillings
at Christmas
And one week's leave a year.
A committee has been appointed to nominate a commis[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible] the W[illegible] Supply
[illegible]
[illegible] chiefly the question of rebuilding the
[illegible]
[illegible] appointed
[illegible] commission

And would it have been worth it after all,
After the cups the marmalade, the tea,
Among the porcelain among some talk of you and me
Would it have been worth while
To have bitten off the matter with a smile,
To have squeezed the universe into a ball
To roll it toward some overwhelming question,
To say "I am Lazarus come from the dead
Come back to tell you all I shall tell you all"—
If one settling a pillow by her head
   Should say That is not what I meant at all
   That is not it at all

And would it have been worth it after all
Would it have been worth while
After the sunsets and the dooryards and the sprinl
      streets
After the novels after the teacups after the skirts t
      trail along the floor—
And this and so much more?—
It is impossible to say just what I mean!
But as if a magic lantern threw the nerves in patterns
      a screen
Would it have been worth while
If one, settling a pillow or throwing off a shawl,
And turning toward the window should say
   "That is not it at all,
   That is not what I meant, at all"



No! I am not Prince Hamlet nor was meant to
Am an attendant lord one that will do
To swell a progress start a scene or two,
Advise the prince, no doubt, an easy *tool,*
Deferential glad *to be of use,*
Politic, cautious, and *meticulous*
Full of high sentence, *but a bit obtuse,*
At times indeed, almost *ridiculous—*
Almost at times, *the Fool*

I grow old . . . I grow old
I shall wear the bottoms of my *trousers rolled*

LINES FOR AN OLD MAN

The tiger in the tiger pit
Is not more irritable than I
The whipping tail is not more still
Than when I smell the enemy
Writhing in the essential blood
dangling from the friendly tree
hen I lay bare the tooth of wit
he hissing over the arched tongue
more affectionate than hate
lore bitter than the love of youth,
And inaccessible by the young
Reflected from my golden eye
The dullard knows that he is mad
Tell me if I am not glad!

About perpetual peace the fletchers and javelin make
and smiths
Have appointed a joint committee to protest against
reduction of orders
Meanwhile the guards shake dice on the marches
And the frogs (O Mantuan) croak in the marshes
Fireflies flare against the faint sheet lightning
What shall I cry?
Mother mother
Here is the row of family portraits dingy busts all l
ing remarkably Roman
Remarkably like each other lit up successively by
flare
Of a *sweaty torchbearer yawning*
O hidden under the   Hidden under the
Where the dove s foot rested and locked for a moment
A still moment repose of noon set under the up
branches of noon s widest tree
Under the breast feathers stirred by the small wind a
noon
There the cyclamen spreads its wings *there the clem*
droops over the lintel
O mother (not among these busts all correctly inscrib
I a tired head among these heads
Necks strong to bear them
Noses strong to break the wind
Mother
May we not be some time almost now together
If *the mactations immolations oblations impetrations*
Are now observed
May we not be
O hidden
Hidden in the stillness of noon in the silent croak
night
Come with the sweep of the little bat s wing with t
small flare of the *firefly or lightning bug*
Rising and falling crowned with dust, the small cr
tures
The small creatures chirp thinly through the du
through the night
O mother
What shall I cry?
We demand a committee a representative committee

(Who recalls the address now of the Imagists?)
But the naked man has always his own nakedness
People remember forever his live limbs

They may drive him out of the camps but one will take
him
They may stop his tongue on his teeth with a ropes argu
ment—
He will lie in a house and be warm when they are shak
ing

Besides Tovarishch how to embrace an army?
How to take to ones chamber a million souls?
How to conceive in the name of a column of marchers?

The things of the poet are done to a man alone
As the things of love are done—or of death when he hears
the
Step withdraw on the stair and the clock tick only

Neither his class nor his kind nor his trade may come near
him
There where he lies on his left arm and will die
Nor his class nor his kind nor his trade when the blood is
jeering

And his knees in the soft of the bed where his love lies

I remind you Barinya the life of the poet is hard—
A hardy life with a boot as quick as a fiver

Is it just to demand of us also to bear arms?

thistles Art is O World O Life
a formula example Turn Your Shirttails Into
Drawers and If It Isn t an Eastman It Isn t A
Kodak therefore my friends let
us now sing each and all fortissimo A
mer
i

ca I
love
You And there re a
hun-dred-mil-lion-oth-ers, like
all of you successfully if
delicately gelded(or spaded)
gentlemen(and ladies)—pretty

littleliverpill—
hearted-Nujolneeding-There s-A-Reason
americans(who tensetendoned and with
upward vacant eyes, painfully
perpetually crouched quivering upon the
sternly allotted sandpile
—how silently
emit a tiny violetflavoured nuisance:Odor?

ono
comes out like a ribbon lies flat on the brush

OMEWHERE I HAVE NEVER TRAV ELLED GLADLY BEYOND

somewhere i have never travelled, gladly beyond
any experience, your eyes have their silence:
in your most frail gesture are things which enclose me,
or which i cannot touch because they are too near

your slightest look easily will unclose me
though i have closed myself as fingers,
you open always petal by petal myself as Spring opens
(touching skilfully, mysteriously) her first rose

l y ur wish be to close me, i and
ll shut very beautifully, suddenly,
n of this flower imagines
erywhere descending

mer

ca I
love
You And there're a
hun-dred mil lion-oth-ers, like
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if your wish be to close me i and
all shut very beautifully suddenly,
rt of this flower imagines
verywhere descending

John Wheelwright, 1897–1940

FISH FOOD

An Obituary to Hart Crane

As you drank deep as Thor, did you think of milk or
wine?
Did you drink blood while you drank the salt deep?
Or see through the film of light, that sharpened your rage
with its stare
a shark, dolphin turtle? Did you not see the Cat
who when Thor lifted her unbased the cubic ground?
You would drain fathomless flagons to be slaked with
vacuum—
The sea's teats have suckled you and you are sunk far
in bubble-dreams under swaying translucent vines
of thundering interior wonder Eagles can never now
carry parts of your body over cupped mountains
as emblems of their anger embers to fire self hate
to other wonders unfolding white flaming vistas

Fishes now look upon you with eyes which do not gossip
Fishes are never shocked Fishes will kiss you each
fish tweak you every kiss takes bits of you away
till your bones alone will roll with the Gulf Streams
swell
So has it been already so have the carpers and puffers
nibbled your carcass of fame each to his liking Now
in tides of noon the bones of your thought suspended
structures
gleam as you intended Noon pulled your eyes with small
magnetic headaches the will seeped from your blood
Seeds
of meaning popped from the pods of thought And you
fell And the unseen
churn of Time changes the pearl hued ocean
like a pearl shaped drop in a huge water-clock
falling from came to go from come to went And you fell
Waters received you Waters of our Birth in Death dis-
solve you

Louise Bogan, 1897–

"COME, SLEEP . . ."

The bee's fixed hexagon
The ant's downward tower;
The whale's effortless eating
The palm's love; the flower

Burnished like brass, clean like wax
Under the pollen
The rough grass blade upright,
The smooth swathe fallen

Do the shadows of these forms and appetites
Repeat when these lives give over
In sleep the rôle of the selfish devourer
The selfless lover

Surely whispers in the glassy corridor
Never trouble their dream
Never for them the dark turreted house reflects itself
In the depthless stream

Stephen Vincent Benét, 1898–1943

THE MOUNTAIN WHIPPOORWILL

Up in the mountains, it's lonesome all the time,
(Sof' win' slewin' thu' the sweet-potato vine).

Up in the mountains, it's lonesome for a child,
(Whippoorwills a-callin' when the sap runs wild).

Up in the mountains, mountains in the fog,
Everythin's as lazy as an old houn' dog.

Born in the mountains, never raised a pet,
Don't want nuthin' an' never got it yet.

Born in the mountains, lonesome-born,
Raised runnin' ragged thu' the cockleburrs and corn.

Never knew my pappy, mebbe never should.
Think he was a fiddle made of mountain laurel-wood.

Never had a mammy to teach me pretty-please.
Think she was a whippoorwill, a-skitin' thu' the trees.

Never had a brother ner a whole pair of pants,
But when I start to fiddle, why, yuh got to start to dance!

Listen to my *fiddle—Kingdom Come—Kingdom Come!*
Hear the frogs a-chunkin' "Jug o' rum, Jug o' rum!"
Hear that mountain whippoorwill be lonesome in the air,
An' I'll tell yuh how I traveled to the Essex County Fair.

Essex County has a mighty pretty fair,
All the smarty fiddlers from the South come there.

Elbows flyin' as they rosin up the bow
For the First Prize Contest in the Georgy Fiddlers' Show.

Old Dan Wheeling, with his whiskers in his ears,
King-pin fiddler for nearly twenty years.

Big Tom Sargent, with his blue wall-eye,
An' Little Jimmy Weezer that can make a fiddle cry.



Anonymous

YOUNG WOMAN'S BLUES

Negro Blues, Twentieth Century

Woke up this mo'nin'
When chickens were crowin' for day,
Felt on the right side of my pillow,
My man had gone away

By his pillow he left a note
Reading, I'm sorry, Jane,
"You got my goat,
"No time to marry,
"No time to settle down"

I'm a young woman
An' ain't done runnin' roun',
I'm a young woman
An' ain't done runnin roun',
Some people call me a hobo,
Some call me a bum,
Nobody knows my name
Nobody knows what I've done.
I'm as good as any woman in your t
I ain't no high yaller,
I'm a deep yaller brown
I ain't goin' marry, ain't goin' settle d
I'm goin' drink good moonshine
An' run these browns down

See that long, lonesome road?
Don' you know it's gotta end?

An' I'm a good woman,
An' I kin get plenty men

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He fiddled high and he fiddled low,
(Listen, little whippoorwill yuh got to spread yore wings!)
He fiddled with a cherrywood bow
(Old Dan Wheeling's got bee honey in his strings)

He fiddled the wind by the lonesome moon,
He fiddled a most almighty tune

He started fiddling like a ghost,
He ended fiddling like a host

He fiddled north an he fiddled south
He fiddled the heart right out of yore mouth

He fiddled here an he fiddled there
He fiddled salvation everywhere

When he was finished the crowd cut loose
(Whippoorwill, they's rain on yore breast)
An I sat there wonderin What's the use?
(Whippoorwill fly home to yore nest)

But I stood up pert an I took my bow
An my fiddle went to my shoulder so

An—they wasn't no crowd to get me fazed—
But I was alone where I was raised

Up in the mountains so still it makes yuh skeered
Where God lies sleepin in his big white beard

An I heard the sound of the squirrel in the pine
An I heard the earth a breathin thu the long night time

They've fiddled the rose an they've fiddled the thorn
But they haven't fiddled the mountain-corn

They've fiddled sinful an fiddled moral
But they haven't fiddled the breshwood laurel

They've fiddled loud an they've fiddled still
But they haven't fiddled the whippoorwill

I started off with a *dump-diddle-dump*
("Oh [illegible] ke loo e in Georgia.
Skunk [illegible] by the bee-gum stump
Whippoorwill [illegible] singin now!")

(Oh Georgia booze is mighty fine booze.

All sittin' roun', spittin' high an' struttin' proud,

Everybody waitin' for the first tweedle-dee,
When in comes a-stumblin'—hill billy me!

Bowed right pretty to the jedges an' the rest,
Took a silver dollar from a hole inside my vest,

Pluncked it on the table an' said, 'There's my callin' ca
An' anyone that licks me—well, he's got to fiddle har

Old Dan Wheeling, he was laughin' fit to holler,
Little Jimmy Weezer said, "There's one dead dollar!"

Big Tom Sargent had a yaller toothy grin,
But I tucked my little whippoorwill spang underneath
chin,
An' petted it an' tuned it till the jedges said "Begin!"

Big Tom Sargent was the first in line,
He could fiddle all the bugs off a sweet potato vine.

He could fiddle down a possum from a mile-high tree
He could fiddle up a whale from the bottom of the sea

Yuh could hear hands spankin' till they spanked ea
other raw,
When he finished variations on "Turkey in the Straw."

Little Jimmy Weezer was the next to play,
He could fiddle all night, he could fiddle all day.

He could fiddle chills, he could fiddle fever,
He could make a fiddle rustle like a lowland river

He could make a fiddle croon like a lovin' woman
An' they clapped like thunder when he'd finished stru
min'.

Then came the ruck of the bob-tailed fiddlers,
The let's go-easies, the fair to middlers.

They got their claps an' they lost their bicker,
An' settled back for some more corn licker.

...he crowd was tired of their no-count squealing,
...t in the center steps Old Dan Wheeling.

E B White, 1899–

I PAINT WHAT I SEE

A Ballad of Artistic Integrity

"What do you paint, when you paint a wall?"
    Said John D's grandson Nelson
"Do you paint just anything there at all?
"Will there be any doves or a tree in fall?
"Or a hunting scene, like an English hall?

    "I paint what I see said Rivera

"What are the colors you use when you paint?"
    Said John D s grandson Nelson
"Do you use any red in the beard of a saint?
"If you do is it terribly red or faint?
"Do you use any blue? Is it Prussian?"

    "I paint what I paint said Rivera.

"Whose is that head that I see on my wall?"
    Said John D s grandson Nelson
"Is it anyone s head whom we know at all?
"A Rensselaer or a Saltonstall?
"Is it Franklin D? Is it Mordaunt Hall?
"Or is it the head of a Russian?

    I paint what I think said Rivera.

"I paint what I paint I paint what I see
    I paint what I think said Rivera
"And the thing that is dearest in life to me
"In a bourgeois hall is Integrity
    However
"I'll take out a couple of people drinkin
"And put in a picture of Abraham Lincoln,
"I could even give you McCormick s reaper
"And I still not make my art much cheaper
"But the head of Lenin has got to stay
"Or my friends will give me the bird today
    The bird the bird forever"

Hart Crane, 1899–1932

AT MELVILLE'S TOMB

ften beneath the wave, wide from this ledge
he dice of drowned men's bones he saw bequeath
n embassy. Their numbers as he watched,
eat on the dusty shore and were obscured.

nd wrecks passed without sound of bells,
he calyx of death's bounty giving back
scattered chapter, livid hieroglyph,
The portent wound in corridors of shells.

Then in the circuit calm of one vast coil,
ts lashings charmed and malice reconciled,
Frosted eyes there were that lifted altars;
And silent answers crept across the stars.

Compass, quadrant and sextant contrive
No farther tides . . . High in the azure steeps
Monody shall not wake the mariner.
This fabulous shadow only the sea keeps.

CAPE HATTERAS

From *The Bridge*

mponderable the dinosaur
sinks slow,
the mammoth saurian
ghoul, the eastern
Cape . . .
hile rises in the west the coastwise range,
slowly the hushed land—
ombustion at the astral core—the dorsal change
f energy—convulsive shift of sand . . .
ut we, who round the capes, the promontories
here strange tongues vary messages of surf
elow grey citadels, repeating to the stars

"It's not good taste in a man like me,"
Said John D.'s grandson Nelson,
"To question an artist's integrity
"Or mention a practical thing like a fee,
"But I know what I like to a large degree
"Though art I hate to hamper,
"For twenty-one thousand conservative bu
"You painted a radical I say shucks,
"I never could rent the offices—
"The capitalistic offices
"For this, as you know, is a public hall
"And people want doves, or a tree in fall,
"And though your art I dislike to hamper,
"I owe a *little* to God and Gramper,
"And after all,
'It's *my* wall . . ."

"We'll see if it is," said Rivera

Hart Crane, 1899–1932

AT MELVILLE'S TOMB

Often beneath the wave wide from th[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

And wrecks passed without sound of bells,
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                                                  Cape . . .
While rises in the west the coastwise range,
                                        slowly the hushed land—
Combustion at the astral core—the dorsal change
Of energy—convulsive shift of sand . . .
But we, who round the capes, the promontories
Where strange tongues vary messages of surf
Below grey citadels, repeating to the stars

The ancient names—return home to our own
Hearths, there to eat an apple and recall
The songs that gypsies dealt us at Marseille
Or how the priests walked—slowly through Bombay·
Or to read you, Walt,—knowing us in thrall

To that deep wonderment, our native clay
Whose depth of red, eternal flesh of Pocahontas—
Those continental folded aeons surcharged
With sweetness below derricks chimneys tunnels—
Is veined by all that time has really pledged us
And from above thin squeaks of radio static
The captured fume of space foams in our ears—
What whisperings of far watches on the main
Relapsing into silence while time clears
Our lenses lifts a focus resurrects
A periscope to glimpse what joys or pain
Our eyes can share or answer—then deflects
Us shunting to a labyrinth submersed
Where each sees only his dim past reversed

But that star-glistered salver of infinity
The circle blind crucible of endless space,
Is sluiced by motion —subjugated never
Adam and Adam's answer in the forest
Left Hesperus mirrored in the lucid pool
Now the eagle dominates our days is jurist
Of the ambiguous cloud We know the strident rule
Of wings imperious *Space* instantaneous
Flickers a moment consumes us in its smile
A flash over the horizon—shifting gears —
And we have laughter or more sudden tears
Dream cancels dream in this new realm of fact
From which we wake into the dream of act
Seeing himself an atom in a shroud —
Man hears himself an engine in a cloud

"—Recorders ages hence —ah syllables of faith'
Walt tell me Walt Whitman if infinity
Be still the same as when you walked the beach
Near Paumanok—your lone patrol— and heard the wraith
Through surf its bird note there a long time falling
For you the panoramas and this breed of towers
Of you—the theme that's statured in the cliff
O Saunterer on free ways still ahead
Not this our empire yet but labyrinth

Whereon your eyes, like the Great Navigator's without
ship
ain from the great stones of each prison crypt
cartoned traffic   Confronting the Exchange,
rusting in a world of stocks,—they also range
oss the hills where second timber strays
ck over Connecticut farms, abandoned pastures,—
a eyes and tidal, undenying, bright with myth!

e nasal whine of power whips a new universe . .
here spouting pillars spoor the evening sky
nder the looming stacks of the gigantic power house
ars prick the eyes with sharp ammoniac proverbs
ew verities, new inklings in the velvet hummed
f dynamos, where hearing's leash is strummed . .
ower's script,—wound, bobbin-bound, refined—
stripped to the slap of belts on booming spools, spurred
nto the bulging bouillon, harnessed jelly of the stars
owards what? The forked crash of split thunder parts
Our hearing momentwise; but fast in whirling armatures
As bright as frogs' eyes, giggling in the girth
Of steely gizzards—axle-bound, confined
In coiled precision, bunched in mutual glee
The bearings glint,—O murmurless and shined
In oilrinsed circles of blind ecstasy!

Stars scribble on our eyes the frosty sagas
The gleaming cantos of unvanquished space
O sinewy silver biplane, nudging the wind's withers!
There, from Kill Devils Hill at Kitty Hawk
Two brothers in their twinship left the dune;
Warping the gale, the Wright windwrestlers veered
Capeward, then blading the wind's flank, banked and
spun
What ciphers risen from prophetic script,
What marathons new-set between the stars!
The soul, by naphtha fledged into new reaches,
Already knows the closer clasp of Mars,—
New latitudes, unknotting, soon give place
To what fierce schedules, rife of doom apace!

☆ ☆ ☆

Behold the dragon's covey—amphibian, ubiquitous
hunched in abysmal cupolas of space
wind endless terminals, Easters of speeding light—
ever gnres outward reering with seraphic grace

My word I poured But was it cognate scored
that tribunal monarch of the air
Those thigh embronzes earth strikes crystal Word
a wounds pledged once to hope—cleft to despair?

The steep encroachments of my blood left me
No answer (could blood hold such a lofty tower
As flings the question true?)—or is it she
Whose sweet mortality stirs latent power?—

d through whose pulse I hear counting the strokes
r veins recall and add revived and sure
he angelus of wars my chest evokes
That I hold healed original now and pure

And builds within a tower that is not stone
(Not stone can jacket heaven)—but slip
Of pebbles—visible wings of silence sown
In azure circles widening as they dip

The matrix of the heart lift down the eye
That shrines the quiet lake and swells a tower
The commodious, tall decorum of that sky
Unseals her earth and lifts love in its shower

Kenneth Fearing, 1902–

PORTRAIT II

clear brown eyes, kindly and alert, with 12 20 vision,
give confident regard to the passing world through R. K. Lampert & Company lenses framed in gold,
Is soul however, is all his own,
andt Brothers necktie and hat (with feather) supply a touch of youth.

With his soul his own, he drives drives, chats and drives,
he first and second bicuspids, lower right, replaced by bridgework, while two incisors have porcelain crowns,

Render unto Federal, state and city Caesar, but not unto time;
Render nothing unto time until Amalgamated Death serves final notice, in proper form,

e vault is ready
e will has been drawn by Clagget Clagget, Clagget & Brown
e policies are adequate Confidential's best reimbursing for disability partial or complete with double indemnity should the end be a pure and simple accident)

thing unto time,
thing unto change nothing unto fate
thing unto you and nothing unto me or to any other known or unknown party or parties living or deceased

Mercury shoes with special arch supporters, take much of the wear and tear
the course a custombuilt driver corrects a tendency to slice
es ravages have been repaired (it was a textbook case) by Drs. Schultz Lightner Mannheim, and Goode
ile all of it is enclosed in excellent tweed with Mr Baumer's personal attention to the shoulders and waist

I all of it now roving, chatting amiably through space in a Plymouth 6,
is soul his own at peace, soothed by Walter Lippmann and sustained by Haig & Haig

Thomas Wolfe, 1900–1938

SOMETHING HAS SPOKEN TO ME IN THE NIGHT

Something has spoken to me in the night
Burning the tapers of the waning year
Something has spoken in the night
And told me I shall die I know not where

Saying
To lose the earth you know for greater knowing
To lose the life you have for greater life
To leave the friends you loved for greater loving
To find a land more kind than home more large t
earth—

Whereon the pillars of this earth are founded
Toward which the conscience of the world is tending—
A wind is rising and the rivers flow

Kenneth Fearing, 1902–

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othing unto change nothing unto fate
othing unto you and nothing unto me or to any other known or unknown party or parties, living or deceased

But Mercury shoes with special arch supporters, take much of the wear and tear
On the course a custombuilt driver corrects a tendency to slice
Love's ravages have been repaired (it was a textbook case) by Drs Schultz Lightner Mannheim, and Goode
While all of it is enclosed in excellent tweed with Mr Baumer's personal attention to the shoulders and waist

And all of it now roving, chatting amiably through space in a Plymouth 6
[illegible] soul his own) at peace soothed by Walter Lipp- stained by Haig & Haig

I watched them like a geometer
And cut a walking stick from a birch
It has been three years now
There is no sign of the groundhog
I stood there in the whirling summer,
My hand capped a withered heart,
And thought of China and of Greece,
Of Alexander in his tent
Of Montaigne in his tower
Of Saint Theresa in her wild lament

Theodore Roethke, 1908–

THE SHAPE OF THE FIRE

I

What's this? A dish for fat lips
Who says? A nameless stranger
Is he a bird or a tree? Not everyone can
Water recedes to the crying of spiders
An old scow bumps over black rocks
A cracked pod calls
Mother me out of here What more will t
bones allow?
Will the sea give the wind suck? A toad fol
into a stone
These flowers are all fangs Comfort me fur
Wake me witch we'll do the dance of rot
sticks
Shale loosens Marl reaches into the field Small birds p
over water
Spirit come near This is only the edge of whiteness
I can't laugh at a procession of dogs
In the hour of ripeness the tree is barren
The she bear mopes under the hill
Mother mother stir from your cave of sorr
A low mouth laps water Weeds weeds how I love you
The arbor is cooler Farewell farewell fond worm
The warm comes without sound

II

Where's the eye
The eyes in the sty
The ears not here
Beneath the hair
When I took off my clothes
To find a nose
There was only one shoe
For the waltz of To
The pinch of Where

e for the flat-headed man I recognize that listener,
n with the platitudes and rubbery doughnuts,
ang at the knees, a varicose horror
llo, hello My nerves knew you, dear boy.
re you come to unhinge my shadow?
t night I slept in the pits of a tongue.
e silver fish ran in and out of my special bindings,
rew tired of the ritual of names and the assistant keeper
of the molluscs
p over a viaduct I came, to the snakes and sucks of another winter,
two-legged dog hunting a new horizon of howls
he wind sharpened itself on a rock,
voice sang

Pleasure on ground
Has no sound,
Easily maddens
The uneasy man

Who careless, slips
In coiling ooze
Is trapped to the lips,
Leaves more than shoes,

Must pull off clothes
To jerk like a frog
On belly and nose
From the sucking bog

My meat eats me Who waits at the gate?
Mother of quartz your words writhe into my ear
Renew the light lewd whisper

III

The wasp waits
The edge cannot eat the centre
The grape glistens
The path tells little to the serpent.
An eye comes out of the wave
The journey from flesh is longest
rose sways least
The redeemer comes a dark way

James Agee, 1909–

PROLOGUE

From Let Us Now Praise Famous Men

To Walker Evan

Against time and the damages of the brain
Sharpen and calibrate Not yet in full
Yet in some arbitrated part
Order the façade of the listless summer

Spies, moving delicately among the enemy
The younger sons, the fools
Set somewhat aside the dialects and the stained skins of
feigned madness
guously signal baffle the eluded sentinel

ar weeping for pity to the shelf of that sick bluff
ng your bl nd father and describe a little
hold him, part wakened fallen among field flowers
shallow
at undisclosed withdraw

not yet that naked hour when armed
Disguise flung flat squarely we challenge the fiend
the running of beasts and the running heaven
he old wild king

Elizabeth Bishop, 1911–

THE FISH

I caught a tremendous fish
and held him beside the boat
lf out of water, with my hook
st in a corner of his mouth.
e didn't fight.
e hadn't fought at all.
le hung a grunting weight,
attered and venerable
nd homely. Here and there
is brown skin hung in strips
ke ancient wall-paper,
nd its pattern of darker brown
vas like wall-paper:
hapes like full-blown roses
tained and lost through age.
He was speckled with barnacles,
fine rosettes of lime,
and infested
with tiny white sea-lice,
and underneath two or three
rags of green weed hung down.
While his gills were breathing in
the terrible oxygen
—the frightening gills,
fresh and crisp with blood,
that can cut so badly—
I thought of the coarse white flesh
packed in like feathers,
the big bones and the little bones,
the dramatic reds and blacks
of his shiny entrails,
and the pink swim-bladder
like a big peony.
I looked into his eyes
which were far larger than mine
but shallower, and yellowed,

Karl Shapiro, 1913–

ELEGY FOR A DEAD SOLDIER

I

A white sheet on the tail-gate of a truck
Becomes an altar; two small candlesticks
Sputter at each side of the crucifix
Laid round with flowers brighter than the blood,
Red as the red of our apocalypse,
Hibiscus that a marching man will pluck
To stick into his rifle or his hat,
And great blue morning glories pale as lips
That shall no longer taste or kiss or swear.
The wind begins a low magnificat,
The chaplain chats, the palmtrees swirl their hair,
The columns come together through the mud.

II

We too are ashes as we watch and hear
The psalm, the sorrow, and the simple praise
Of one whose promised thoughts of other days
Were such as ours, but now wholly destroyed,
The service record of his youth wiped out,
His dream dispersed by shot, must disappear.
What can we feel but wonder at a loss
That seems to point at nothing but the doubt
Which flirts our sense of luck into the ditch?
Reader of Paul who prays beside this fosse,
Shall we believe our eyes or legends rich
With glory and rebirth beyond the void?

III

For this comrade is dead, dead in the war,
A young man out of millions yet to live,
One cut away from all that war can give,
Freedom of self and peace to wander free.
Who mourns in all this sober multitude
Who did not feel the bite of it before
The bullet found its aim? This worthy flesh,
This body laid in a coffin and reviewed—
Who has not wrapped himself in this same flag,
Heard the light fall of dirt, his wound still fresh,
Felt his eyes closed, and heard the distant brag
Of the last volley of humanity?

the irises backed and packed
with tarnished tinfoil
seen through the lenses
of old scratched isinglass.
They shifted a little, but not
to return my stare.
—It was more like the tipping
of an object toward the light.
I admired his sullen face,
the mechanism of his jaw,
and then I saw
that from his lower lip
—if you could call it a lip—
grim, wet, and weapon-like,
hung five old pieces of fish-line,
or four and a wire leader
with the swivel still attached,
with all their five big hooks
grown firmly in his mouth.
A green line, frayed at the end
where he broke it, two heavier lines,
and a fine black thread
still crimped from the strain and snap
when it broke and he got away.
Like medals with their ribbons
frayed and wavering,
a five-haired beard of wisdom
trailing from his aching jaw.
I stared and stared
and victory filled up
the little rented boat,
from the pool of bilge
where oil had spread a rainbow
around the rusted engine
to the bailer rusted orange,
the sun-cracked thwarts,
the oarlocks on their strings,
the gunnels—until everything
was rainbow, rainbow, rainbow!
And I let the fish go.

VII

No history deceived him, for he knew
Little of times and armies not his own;
He never felt that peace was but a loan,
Had never questioned the idea of gain.
Beyond the headlines once or twice he saw
The gathering of a power by the few
But could not tell their names; he cast his vote,
Distrusting all the elected but not the law.
He laughed at socialism; on *mourrait*
Pour les industriels? He shed his coat
And not for brotherhood, but for his pay.
To him the red flag marked the sewer main.

VIII

Above all else he loathed the homily,
The slogan and the ad. He paid his bill
But not for Congressmen at Bunker Hill.
Ideals were few and those there were not made
For conversation. He belonged to church
But never spoke of God. The Christmas tree,
The Easter egg, baptism, he observed,
Never denied the preacher on his perch,
And would not sign Resolved That or Whereas.
Softness he had and hours and nights reserved
For thinking, dressing, dancing to the jazz.
His laugh was real, his manners were home made.

IX

Of all men poverty pursued him least;
He was ashamed of all the down and out,
Spurned the panhandler like an uneasy doubt,
And saw the unemployed as a vague mass
Incapable of hunger or revolt.
He hated other races, south or east,
And shoved them to the margin of his mind.
He could recall the justice of the Colt,
Take interest in a gang war like a game.
His ancestry was somewhere far behind
And left him only his peculiar name.
Doors opened, and he recognized no class.

IV

By chance I saw him die, stretched on the ground,
A tattooed arm lifted to take the blood
Of someone else sealed in a tin. I stood
During the last delirium that stays
The intelligence a tiny moment more,
And then the [illegible] ind.
The end [illegible]
A stupid [illegible]
[illegible]

V

We ask for no statistics of the killed,
For nothing political impinges on
This single casualty, or all those gone
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible] and this one like the rest
However others calculate the cost,
To us the final aggregate is one,
One with a name, one transferred to the blest,
And though another stoops and takes the gun,
We cannot add the second to the first

VI

I would not speak for him who could not speak
Unless my fear were true he was not wronged,
He knew to which decision he belonged
But let it choose itself Ripe in instinct,
Neither the victim nor the volunteer,
He followed and the leaders could not seek
Beyond the followers Much of this he knew,
The journey was a detour that would steer
Into the Lincoln Highway of a land
Remorselessly improved, excited, new,
And that was what he wanted. He had planned
To earn and drive. He and the world had winked.

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His ancestors was somewhere far behind
And left him only his peculiar name.
Doors opened, and he recognized no class.

X

His children would have known a heritage,
Just or unjust, the richest in the world,
The quantum of all art and science curled
In the horn of plenty, bursting from the horn,
A people bathed in honey, Paris come,
Vienna transferred with the highest wage,
A World's Fair spread to Phoenix, Jacksonville,
Earth's capitol, the new Byzantium,
Kingdom of man—who knows? Hollow or firm
No man can ever prophesy until
Out of death some undiscovered germ,
Whole toleration or pure peace is born

XI

The time to mourn is short that best becomes
The military dead We lift and fold the flag,
Lay bare the coffin with its written tag,
And march away Behind, four others wait
To lift the box, the heaviest of loads
The anesthetic afternoon benumbs,
Sickens our senses forces back our talk
We know that others on tomorrow's roads
Will fall ourselves perhaps the man beside,
Over the world the threatened, all who walk
And could we mark the grave of him who died
We would write this beneath his name and date

Epitaph

Underneath this wooden cross there lies
A Christian killed in battle You who read
Remember that this stranger died in pain
And passing here if you can lift your eyes
Upon a peace kept by a human creed
Know that one soldier has not died in vain

New Guinea 1944

Peter Viereck, 1916–

KILROY WAS HERE

I

Also Ulysses once—that other war
(Is it because we find his scrawl
Today on every privy door
That we forget his ancient role?)
Also was there—he did it for the wage—
When a Cathay-drunk Genoese set sail
Whenever *"longen folk to goon on pilgrimages"*
Kilroy is there;
he tells The Miller's Tale

II

At times he seems a paranoiac king
Who stamps his crest on walls and says, "My own!"
But in the end he fades like a lost tune
Tossed here and there, whom all the breezes sing.
"Kilroy was here"; these words sound wanly gay,
Haughty yet tired with long marching.
He is Orestes—guilty of what crime?—
For whom the Furies still are searching;
When they arrive, they find their prey
(Leaving his name to mock them) went away.
Sometimes he does not flee from them in time:
"*Kilroy was—*
(with his blood a dying man
Wrote half the phrase out in Bataan.)

III

Kilroy, beware. "HOME" is the final trap
That lurks for you in many a wily shape:
In pipe and slippers plus a Loyal Hound
Or fooling around, just fooling around.
Kind to the old (their warm Penelope)
But fierce to boys,
thus "home" becomes that sea,
Horribly disguised, where you were always drowned,—
(How could suburban Crete condone

The yarns you would have V-mailed from the su
And folksy fishes sip Icarian tea

One stab of hopeless wings imprinted your
Exultant Kilroy-signature
Upon sheer sky for the world to stare
"I was there! I was there! I was there!"

IV

God is like Kilroy He too sees it all
That's how he knows of every sparrow's fall
That's why we prayed each time the tightropes cracked
On which our loveliest clowns contrived their act
The G I Faustus who was
everywhere
Strolled home again "What was it like outside?"
Asked Can't, with his good neighbors Ought and But
And pale Perhaps and grave-eyed Better Not,
For Kilroy means the world is very wide
He was there, he was there, he was then
And in the suburbs Can't sat down and cried

Robert Lowell, 1917–

THE QUAKER GRAVEYARD IN NANTUCKET

(For Warren Winslow, Dead at Sea)

> *Let man have dominion over the fishes of the sea and the fowls of the air and the beasts and the whole earth and every creeping creature that moveth upon the earth*

I

A brackish reach of shoal off Madaket,—
The sea was still breaking violently and night
Had steamed into our North Atlantic Fleet
When the drowned sailor clutched the drag net Light
Flashed from his matted head and marble feet
He grappled at the net
With the coiled hurdling muscles of his thighs
The corpse was bloodless, a botch of reds and whites,
Its open staring eyes
Were lustreless dead lights
Or cabin-windows on a stranded hulk
Heavy with sand We weight the body, close
Its eyes and heave it seaward whence it came,
Where the heel headed dogfish barks its nose
On Ahab's void and forehead and the name
Is blocked in yellow chalk
Sailors who pitch this portent at the sea
Where dreadnaughts shall confess
Its hell bent deity
When you are powerless
To sand bag this Atlantic bulwark faced
By the earth-shaker green unwearied chaste
In his steel scales ask for no Orphean lute
To pluck life back The guns of the steeled fleet
Recoil and then repeat
The hoarse salute

IV

the end of them, three-quarters fools,
ng at straws to sail

each increasing, its enormous snout
ng the ocean's side

d graves?

V

n the whale's viscera go and the roll

e great ash pit of Jehoshaphat
bones cry for the blood of the white whale,
fat flukes arch and whack about its ears
death lance churns into the sanctuary, tears
gun blue swingle, heaving like a flail

in Thy side.

II

Whenever winds are moving and their breath
Heaves at the roped-in bulwarks of this pier,
The terns and sea-gulls tremble at your death
In these home waters. Sailor, can you hear
The Pequod's sea wings, beating landward, fall
Headlong and break on our Atlantic wall
Off 'Sconset, where the yawing S-boats splash
The bell-buoy, with ballooning spinnakers,
As the entangled, screeching mainsheet clears
The blocks: off Madaket, where lubbers lash
The heavy surf and throw their long lead squids
For blue-fish? Sea-gulls blink their heavy lids
Seaward. The winds' wings beat upon the stones,
Cousin, and scream for you and the claws rush
At the sea's throat and wring it in the slush
Of this old Quaker graveyard where the bones
Cry out in the long night for the hurt beast
Bobbing by Ahab's whaleboats in the East.

III

All you recovered from Poseidon died
With you, my cousin, and the harrowed brine
Is fruitless on the blue beard of the god,
Stretching beyond us to the castles in Spain,
Nantucket's westward haven. To Cape Cod
Guns, cradled on the tide,
Blast the eelgrass about a waterclock
Of bilge and backwash, roil the salt and sand
Lashing earth's scaffold, rock
Our warships in the hand
Of the great God, where time's contrition blues
Whatever it was these Quaker sailors lost
In the mad scramble of their lives. They died
When time was open-eyed,
Wooden and childish; only bones abide
There, in the nowhere, where their boats were t
Sky-high, where mariners had fabled news
Of IS, the swashing castle. What it cost
Them is their secret. In the sperm-whale's dark
I see the Quakers drown and hear their cry:
"If God himself had not been on our side,
If God himself had not been on our side,
When the Atlantic rose against us, why,
Then it had swallowed us up qu

IV

This is the end of the whaleroad and the whale
Who spewed Nantucket bones on the thrashed swell
nd stirred the troubled waters to whirlpools
o send the Pequod packing off to hell
his is the end of them three-quarters fools,
natching at straws to sail
eaward and seaward on the turntail whale,
pouting out blood and water as it rolls,
ick as a dog to these Atlantic Shoals
Clamavimus, O depths. Let the sea-gulls wail

or water, for the deep where the high tide
Mutters to its hurt self mutters and ebbs
Waves wallow in their wash go out and out,
Leave only the death rattle of the crabs,
The beach increasing its enormous snout
Sucking the ocean s side
This is the end of running on the waves
We are poured out like water Who will dance
The mast lashed master of Leviathans
Up from this field of Quakers in their unstoned graves?

V

When the whale s viscera go and the roll
Of its corruption overruns this world
Beyond tree-swept Nantucket and Wood s Hole
And Martha s Vineyard Sailor will your sword
Whistle and fall and sink into the fat?
In the great ash pit of Jehoshaphat
The bones cry for the blood of the white whale,
The fat flukes arch and whack about its ears,
The death lance churns into the sanctuary, tears
The gun blue swingle heaving like a flail
And hacks the coiling life out it works and drags
And rips the sperm whale s midriff into rags
Gobbets of blubber spill to wind and weather,
Sailor and gulls go round the stoven timbers
Where the morning stars sing out together
And thunder shakes the white surf and dismembers
The red flag hammered in the mast head Hide,
Our steel Jonas Messias, in Thy side.

IV

This is the end of them, three-quarters fools,
Snatching at straws to sail

sail

For water for the deep where the high tide
Mutters to its hurt self, mutters and ebbs
Waves wallow in their wash go out and out,
Leave only the death rattle of the crabs,

Up from this field of Quakers in their unstoned graves?

V

When the whale's viscera go and the roll
Of its corruption overruns this world
Beyond tree-swept Nantucket and Woods Hole
And Martha's Vineyard, Sailor, will your sword
Whistle and fall and sink into the fat?
In the great ash pit of Jehoshaphat
The bones cry for the blood of the white whale,
The fat flukes arch and whack about its ears

IV

This is the end of the whaleroad and the whale
Who spewed Nantucket bones on the thrashed swell
And stirred the troubled waters to whirlpools
To send the Pequod packing off to hell
This is the end of them three-quarters fools
Snatching at straws to sail
Seaward and seaward on the turntail whale,
Spouting out blood and water as it rolls
Sick as a dog to these Atlantic Shoals
Clamavimus O depths Let the sea gulls wail

For water for the deep where the high tide
Mutters to its hurt self mutters and ebbs
Waves wallow in their wash go out and out,
Leave only the death rattle of the crabs
The beach increasing its enormous snout
Sucking the ocean s side
This is the end of running on the waves
We are poured out like water Who will dance
The mast lashed master of Leviathans
Up from this field of Quakers in their unstoned graves?

V

When the whale s viscera go and the roll
Of its corruption overruns this world
Beyond tree-swept Nantucket and Wood s Hole
And Martha s Vineyard Sailor will your sword
Whistle and fall and sink into the fat?
In the great ash pit of Jehoshaphat
The bones cry for the blood of the white whale
The fat flukes arch and whack about its ears
The death lance churns into the sanctuary tears
The gun blue swingle heaving like a flail
And hacks the co ling life out it works and drags
And rips the sperm whale s midriff into rags
Gobbets of blubber spill to wind and weather
Sailor and gulls go round the stoven timbers
Where the morning stars sing out together
And thunder shakes the white surf and dismembers
The red flag hammered in the mast head Hide,
r steel Jonas Messias in Thy side.